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ABSTRACT

The Institute of Family Studies has completed its fifth year of operation; its future development depends on a clear statement of government support backed by sufficient staff and financial resources. This report focuses on current operating difficulties, structure, and achievements and activities of the Institute during the 1984-85 fiscal year. The first section, entitled "Facing the Future," discusses budget restrictions and reviews the Institute's role and functions. The second section, "Structure and Functions," identifies the membership and staff and reports the financial statement for 1980-81 through 1984-85. The third and longest section, "Operations," discusses social structure and family process, family law, the Children in Families Project, family support projects, family policies, and research development. The last section, "Information Collection and Dissemination," reviews the Institute's information and reference services, Family Database, publications program, media coverage, and staff lectures and publications. (DST)

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1984–85 ANNUAL REPORT

Institute of Family Studies

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1984–85 ANNUAL REPORT

Board of Management
Institute of Family Studies

Institute of Family Studies
766 Elizabeth Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

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INSTITUTE OF FAMILY STUDIES
Board of Management

LEWIS HOUSE,
766 Elizabeth Street, MELBOURNE. VIC. 3000.
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The Hon. L.F. Bowen, M.P.,
Attorney-General,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600

Dear Mr. Bowen,

In accordance with the Family Law (Institute of Family Studies) Regulations, we have much pleasure in presenting the fifth Annual Report of the Institute of Family Studies. The report relates to the period from 1 July, 1984 to 30 June, 1985.

K.J.A. ASCHE (Presiding Member)
L.J. BRYSON
R.K. BURR
J.F. DAVOREN
D.E. EDGAR
M.M. FINN
C.P. PETRE

Melbourne
September 1985

Introduction

This report marks the completion of the Institute's fifth year of operation. Five years may be regarded as an appropriate landmark from which to judge how well an organisation has performed in the light of expectations held of it, taking into account, of course, the resources placed at its disposal. So while this report's primary function is to describe significant activities during the financial year 1984–85, it also serves as a measure of progress over the first half decade of the Institute's life. In addition, for a variety of reasons discussed in the following section, a call is made for demonstrated government commitment to allow the Institute to meet the challenges and opportunities now before it and in the future.

In summarising progress, it is a matter of great concern that problems noted in last year's report have persisted and that the call then made for a review of the Institute's staffing and financial resources in the light of its achievements has not elicited a positive response. Full-time and part-time staff members have remained unchanged for the past three and two years respectively. Funds available for research activities have continued to decline in real terms while increased allocations for operating expenses have only kept pace with rising fixed costs. A detailed analysis of IFS funding over the five year period is included in the section on Structure and Functions.

Budget and staff restrictions during the year meant no new data collections were undertaken with the exception of the Economic Consequences of Marriage Breakdown survey. Stage two of the longitudinal Australian Family Formation Project already deferred from 1983–84 was again deferred. A major reason for undertaking this project was to track and analyse over a period of years the changing experiences,

attitudes and values of young Australians in the key family formation years. The Institute's inability to follow up this sample seriously diminishes the value of the whole project. As each year passes the logistic difficulties of tracking the respondents increase and problems arise over the reliability of retrospective information.

Analysis of data from all Institute studies and from sources such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics suffered during the year as the load on the in-house computing facility exceeded capacity. A seemingly responsible decision in 1981 to instal a minimal system which could be readily upgraded as requirements dictated has worked to the Institute's disadvantage. Requests for funds to permit upgrading were denied for 1984–85 with the result that research staff face unacceptable delays with their analyses, despite overnight and weekend scheduling of tasks. Important work on the development of the Australian Families Income Transfer (AFIT) project has been delayed for the same reason. Upgrading will proceed in 1985–86 but at considerable cost to all other activities. This matter is dealt with in more detail in the following section.

Despite the difficulties faced over the past year, several major achievements have been recorded. These are mentioned here in brief and covered in greater detail later in the report. The Economic Consequences of Marriage Breakdown survey which commenced in 1983–84 was substantially completed during 1984–85. Conducted in conjunction with the Law Reform Commission's Matrimonial Property Inquiry reference, this study is the first of its kind in Australia and provides a more complete picture of the financial situation of former marriage partners following divorce than is available anywhere else in the world. In view of the study's importance, several staff members have been dedicated full time to its completion and it absorbed a major proportion of the year's research funds. The findings will have an important role in the Matrimonial Property Inquiry's final report and recommendations which, in turn, will be a landmark in Australian social policy considerations.

In August, 1984 the Institute hosted the XXth International Seminar of the International Sociological Association's Committee on Family Research. The theme chosen for the seminar 'Social Change and Family Policies' was designed to ensure relevance to government policy issues. Held at the Victorian Arts Centre from 20 to 24 August, 1984, the seminar attracted around 250 participants and reaction to the organisation and content was overwhelmingly positive. A special appropriation to cover around two thirds of the cost was provided by the Commonwealth Government and the remainder was absorbed within the Institute's budget at the cost of other activities.

Several major publications were released during the year. The product of work carried out over previous years as well as during 1984–85, this tangible evidence of endeavour has been well received by the Institute's various audiences. Foremost among them were *Ethnic family values in Australia: the child's eye view of family life* – a report to respondents in the Institute's Australian Children in Families Study; the hard copy version of FAMILY *Database* – a computerised bibliographic reference system of Australian publications on families and family life; and several publications connected with the AFIT project. More details on these and the Institute's other publications are contained in the Information Collection and Dissemination section of this report.

The Board of Management considers that the Institute is now at a stage where its future development depends on a clear statement of government support backed by sufficient staff and financial resources. Events during the second half of the period

covered by this report indicate there is an opportunity for the government to demonstrate a commitment to the Institute and its valuable work for all Australian families. The next section has been included to underline the importance of those events to the evaluation of past achievements and consideration of future requirements.

Facing the Future

At the beginning of 1985 the Government, in framing its 1985–86 Budget, considered a range of options aimed at reducing Commonwealth expenditure. Within the Attorney-General's portfolio, one option involved the abolition of a number of statutory authorities including the Institute of Family Studies. The Attorney-General was asked to consider that option, along with others, as a means of reducing expenditure within his portfolio. The Attorney-General rejected the abolition option in favour of general reductions in the bids of some of the elements of his portfolio. This demonstration of support for the Institute was greatly appreciated by the Board of Management.

Budget Restrictions

In order to contribute to meeting the target figure established for the portfolio, the Institute reduced its 'bid' for 1985–86 by 5.7 per cent. In doing so, the Board of Management with the Director and staff conducted a thorough review of priorities for 1985–86 against resources likely to be available and determined that, with an allocation reduced by 5.7 per cent, the highest priority task was to upgrade the in-house computing facility. This had already been delayed with serious consequences for operational efficiency. Even at the expense of conducting no new data collections for the year and reductions in all areas of expenditure, the future viability of the Institute was assessed as fundamentally dependent on adequate computing resources costing $250 000. The effect of this decision (along with the already accepted 5.7 per cent reduction) was to reduce the Administrative Expenses item (which meets all the costs of running the Institute apart from salaries) of the 1985–86 budget from $1.3m to $960 000. In 1984–85 the equivalent figure was $1.25m.

At a later stage in its budget deliberations, the Expenditure Review Committee of Cabinet rejected the computer upgrading proposal and deleted the $250 000 from the Institute's bid.

Following representations by the Director to the Attorney-General, an approach was made to the Minister for Finance for Cabinet's decision to be reviewed. The approach was successful but resulted in a further reduction of the Administrative Expenses item of $250 000 to provide the funds. As a result, the Institute faces the coming year with an Administrative Expenses budget of $736 000 or more than 40 per cent less than was available in 1984–85. The problems of operating with that level of reduction require no emphasis. All areas of activity will be affected, but one of the major impacts as far as public perception of the Institute is concerned will be to the publications program. Reports based on work carried out in past years which would have been published by the Institute now will not appear unless taken up by commercial publishers. The extent of the problem is demonstrated in the Operations section of this report.

Review of the Institute

Further Cabinet consideration of the 1985–86 Budget led to a call for additional savings. The question of abolition was again raised and rejected, but Cabinet accepted a Department of Finance suggestion that a review of the Institute be conducted (along with other authorities in the Attorney-General's portfolio) with a view to identifying areas of overlap with the Attorney-General's Department, and between authorities as well as possible amalgamations. As proposed, the review would be internal, that is, it would comprise officers of the Department of Finance, the Attorney-General's Department and the Institute, and would be carried out primarily in the second half of 1985.

Response to Review Proposal

In formulating its response to the challenge posed by these events, the Board of Management welcomes the opportunity it provides and calls for a widening of the review committee's composition and the scope of its coverage. Having already suggested a major review of the Institute's staffing and funding levels in the light of a revised set of functions in last year's annual report, the present circumstances simply provide additional urgency. An immediate review will contain the damage caused by the budget reductions described above and, if it is to have any real effect, must lead to a clear statement of support backed by adequate resources or an equally clear declaration that Australia does not require an Institute of Family Studies. Failure to adopt one or the other course, for example, to amalgamate the Institute with other bodies or reduce its staffing and/or funding levels, would seriously damage morale and inevitably lead to a depletion of current staff. In essence, amalgamation or reduction in resources is tantamount to abolition.

An internal review committee consisting of officials of the Department of Finance, the Attorney-General's Department and the Institute is inadequate for any meaningful review. The review must be full, open and representative if it is to achieve anything. Internal consideration limited to any areas of overlap or duplication, the possibility of amalgamation, and staff reductions which might be effected, will at best make some contribution to ad hoc decision making. It will not provide a basis on which longer term government decisions can be made; nor will it give the Institute a secure basis for

consolidating its functions of identifying and explaining factors affecting marital and family stability in Australia.

A properly constituted review committee would comprise at least three members with expertise in socio-legal policy issues, social science research, social economics, and the broad area of marriage guidance/counselling/education. It should be headed by a member of the Government to ensure that Government priorities regarding families are kept in view, or alternatively by a completely independent person with a member of the Government as one of the committee. Such a committee could be advised by departmental officials as well as Institute staff. There is no reason why this committee could not report within the six months already suggested.

Evidence of the need for widening the scope of the review may be demonstrated in a variety of ways. First and foremost, comparison of the following statement of proposed **Roles and Functions of the Institute**, reproduced below from the 1983–84 Annual Report, with the current functions statement in Part XIVA of the Family Law Act (see Structure and Operations section following), emphasises the growth and development of the Institute's functions. The proposed Roles and Functions statement broadly reflects what is now being done and recognition of it is a necessary first step in charting the future course of the Institute. The statement forms part of a document entitled 'IFS – Summary of Roles and Functions' which also includes background to current functions and activities and a detailed explanation of the rationale for the revised functions and their implications. This document represents the starting point for an appropriately comprehensive review.

Role and Functions of the Institute

The Institute's overall role is:

1 To serve as a national authority for consultation on matters affecting the well-being of all Australian families.
2 To suggest and encourage the development of improved methods of family support, including measures preventive of family disruption, education processes and ways in which families can better meet the criteria of equal human rights now embodied in Australian legislation. In particular, this role is to be carried out via the following functions:
3 To monitor trends in the demographic and social structure of Australian families and identify the implications of such changes for social policy.
4 To conduct research on the operation and effect of the Family Law Act and to encourage better statistical and research information under that Act.
5 To conduct research on factors relating to family functioning, with the object of recommending relevant means of family support.
6 To evaluate on a continuing basis the economic status and well-being of Australian families.
7 To monitor, and report on the effect on family functioning and family relationships of federal and state legislation and programs of family support.
8 To disseminate, via media information, publications and public seminars, the findings of its research, with the object of improving community understanding of factors affecting marital and family well-being.
9 To coordinate and encourage wider research on Australian families by the making of grants.
10 To act as a national repository of information about Australian families.

In addition, the review must establish the extent to which resources allocated to the Institute are adequate for the functions outlined. This would involve an assessment of what has been achieved, the restrictions imposed by resource limitations over the past three years in particular, and the extent of unmet demand for information, advice and assistance. The document 'IFS – Summary of Roles and Functions' indicates the resource requirements necessary to achieve a properly functioning organisation hence providing the review committee with a point of reference.

Finally, the Board of Management believes the Institute has carried out its functions with dedication and imagination over the past five years. It has established itself internationally as an unique organisation which has already achieved significant results and contributed much to the Australian population which supports it. Within Australia it has increased awareness of family change and its importance for social, political and economic considerations, as well as demonstrating the need for policy changes which might better support family life. Current issues such as unemployment, youth problems, poverty, the rights and status of children, and family breakdown are all experienced most acutely in the family context. There is now more than ever a need for an appropriately supported Institute of Family Studies to identify and develop understanding of those factors, and the Board is confident this will be confirmed by a proper review.

Structure and Functions

The Institute of Family Studies was established in February 1980 under Part XIVA of the *Family Law Act* 1975. This legislation states:The functions of the Institute are:

1 To promote, by the conduct, encouragement and coordination of research and other appropriate means, the identification of, and development of understanding of, the factors affecting marital and family stability in Australia, with the object of promoting the protection of the family as the natural and fundamental group unit in society; and
2 To advise and assist the Attorney-General in relation to the making of grants, out of moneys available under appropriations made by the Parliament, for purposes related to the functions of the Institute and the supervising of the employment of grants so made.

Responsible Minister

The Institute operates within the portfolio of the Attorney-General. As a statutory body the Institute operates independently of specific direction from the responsible Minister. Because the Act failed to specify any financial powers, and the staffing resources available to the Institute have been insufficient to meet both research and administrative needs, certain administrative services are provided by the Attorney-General's Department.

Membership and Staff

The structure of the Institute includes a Board of Management, a Director appointed for an initial seven year term, and staff both full-time and part-time, the number of which is subject to government control through the human resource budgetting mechanism. In

addition, the Institute hires casual staff and consultants for specific research projects or specific functional tasks as they are needed.

Board of Management

The Hon. Mr. Justice Austin Asche, BA, LLM(Melb.)
Presiding Member Senior Judge, Family Court of Australia, Melbourne
(Appointed to Board of Management February 1980. Current term expires June 1986)

Professor Lois Bryson, BA DipSocStud DipEd(Melb.) PhD(Monash)
Associate Professor, School of Sociology, University of New South Wales, Kensington.
(August 1983–June 1986)

Rod Burr, LLB(Adel.)
Partner, Playford, Nicolle, Burr & Co., Solicitors, Adelaide
(August 1983–June 1986)

John Davoren, BA, DipSocWork(Syd.) MSc(Soc.Admin)(WRU)
Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Benevolent Society of New South Wales
(August 1983–June 1986)

Dr Don Edgar, BA MEd(Melb.) PhD(Stanford)
Director, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne
(February 1980–February 1987)

Mary Finn, BA LLB(Qld.)
Principal Legal Officer, Attorney-General's Department, Canberra
(August 1983–June 1986)

Clare Petre, BSocStud DipCrim(Syd.) MSc(Soc.Admin)(London)
ABC TV Features, St. Leonards
(August 1983–June 1986)

Staff of the Institute

The Institute's staffing levels are determined by the government as part of the annual resource allocation procedures. At 30 June 1985 the approved staffing level was 27 full-time staff years made up of 21 full-time and 10 part-time members. Staff are appointed under the Institute's own Terms and Conditions of Appointment which, for the most part, are similar to those applying in the Australian Public Service.

All staff, including the Information Officer, are located at Lewis House, 766 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne 3000 (Telephone: (03) 342 9100).

Director
Don Edgar
BA MEd(Melb.) PhD(Stanford)

Deputy Director, Research
Peter McDonald
BCom(UNSW) PhD(ANU)

A/g Deputy Director, Implementation and Management
David Keane
BA(ANU) MBA(Melb.)

Administration
Kerrie Albert*
Rhonda Carrington
Sharon Craig
Peter Good
Cath McConville
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Sonia Savannah

Computer Centre
Leigh Baker
BA(Swinburne)

Andrew Prolisko
BA(La Trobe)

Robert Wilks
DipEDP(CIT)

Family Information Centre
Mari Davis
BA(Melb.) MLib(Monash) ALAA

Fiona Finlayson*
DipLib(BCAE)

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BA(La Trobe)

Belinda Stonehouse*
BA(SA)

Deborah Whithear
BA(Syd). DipLib(UNSW) ALAA

Information Officer
Elizabeth Sharman
BA(Tas.) DipLib(TCAE)

Research
Paul Amato
BA(Calif.State) MA(San Fran.State) PhD(James Cook)

Helen Brownlee*
BA(East Anglia) MA(La Trobe)

Andrew Burbidge*
(on secondment to the Minister for Social Security from 20/2/85) BA MA PhD(Melb.)

Gordon Carmichael
BA MA(Auck.) PhD(ANU)

Peter d'Abbs
(to 31/12/84) BA(Melb.) MA(Exeter) PhD(Melb.)

Kathleen Funder
MA(Melb.) BEd(Monash) MAPsS

Helen Glezer
BA(Melb.) MA(La Trobe)

Patricia Harper*
BA DipEd(Melb.)

Margaret Harrison
LLB(Melb.) LLM(McGill)

Christine Kilmartin*
BSocStud(Qld.)

Kerry Lovering
(to 27/8/84) BSc(Syd.) MA(UCLA) DipEd(Melb.) MAdmin(Monash)

Frank Maas
BEc DipEd(Monash) BEd(La Trobe)

Gay Ochiltree
BA BEd(La Trobe) TPTC(Toorak S.C.)

Don Stewart
(on secondment to Victorian Government's Social Development Committee) BA(Durham) MA(Leicester) PhD(Otago) PGCertEd(Oxford)

Ruth Weston*
BA MA(Melb.)

Ilene Wolcott
BA(Rochester) MA(American Univ.)*

Part-time

Expenditure and Receipts: 1980–81–1984–85

The financial resources available to the Institute influence to a major degree the performance of functions and over the past five years have determined priorities for research and information dissemination activities. The table below illustrates expenditure for the five years of the Institute's life and, for 1984–85, receipts from the sale of publications. An analysis of trends in expenditure for the period follows.

Table 2.1 Expenditure by Year ($)

Item	*1980–81*	*1981–82*	*1982–83*	*1983–84*	*1984–85*
SALARIES[1]	321 819	552 651	610 649	730 208	860 537
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES					
Travelling & Subsistence	69 550	63 304	73 624	93 822	59 863
Office Requisites[2]	70 013	94 291	129 547	156 803	10 503
Postage & Telephones	21 761	34 572	58 036	61 810	54 433
Office Services [3]	74 375	82 323	117 900	161 695	186 775
Library	20 482	35 922	54 290	46 597	49 822
Computer Services	9 123	44 588	38 354	54 150	67 990
Consultants	5 855	17 182	6 179	9 664	—
Incidentals[4]	19 804	16 068	20 251	53 331	186 734
Research Operations[5]	231 806	263 996	327 822	312 370	321 488
Furniture & Fittings	37 468	36 039	74 031	41 017	26 676
Superannuation[6]	—	66 000	84 261	90 401	118 264
Publishing & Dissemination[2]	—	—	—	—	167 182
	560 237	754 285	984 565	1 081 660	1 249 757
CAPITAL WORKS & SERVICES[7]	—	204 992	18 161	69 200	3 273
TOTAL	882 056	1 481 928	1 595 214	1 881 063	2 113 567
RECEIPTS	—	—	—	—	39 155[8]

Notes:

1. Salaries expenditure has met the costs of employing full and part time staff which comprised 15 full time and 8 part time in 1980–81 and 21 full time and 10 part time in 1984–85. The 1980–81 figure represents only part year costs as initial staff recruitment was undertaken.
2. Until 1984–85 the cost of printing Institute publications was included under the Printing sub-item of Office Requisites. In 1984–85 a separate item, Publishing and Dissemination was created which covers the preparation of publications, their printing and distribution costs.
3. The major component of the Office Services item is rent paid for the Institute's premises at 766 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. In 1984–85, for example, this constituted $147 774.
4. The sharp increase in the Incidentals item for 1984–85 resulted from a 'one-off' provision by the government for the XXth International CFR Seminar on 'Social Change and Family Policies' sponsored by the IFS in conjunction with the International Sociological Association's Committee on Family Research. $98 000 was provided as a special contribution by the Government but actual costs to the Institute exceeded $150 000. The remainder was found at the expense of other activities.
5. Research Operations is the item under which the research program is funded. Expenditure under this item varies in nature from year to year but has included payments to outside researchers to carry out projects under contract to the Institute, payments to teams of interviewers and data coders, engaged to assist in Institute-run studies, payments to Specialist Assistants engaged for varying periods of time because they have skills or expertise otherwise not available to the Institute, and the cost of running the annual program of Support Grants.
6. As an 'approved authority' under the *Superannuation Act*, 1975, the Institute is required to meet the cost of the employer's share of benefits payable to employees who contribute to the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme.

7. Provision is made under the Capital Works and Services item for the acquisition of capital plant and equipment. In 1981–82 this comprised $181 614 for the cost of purchasing and installing the Institute's Prime computing facility and $23 378 for a PABX switchboard. In 1982–83 a final payment of $18 161, representing 10 per cent of the purchase price, was made on the computer. A further $69 200 was provided in 1983–84 to allow upgrading of the computing facility in accordance with plans established at the time of purchase. A final payment of $3 273 was made on that upgrading in 1984–85.
8. A decision was taken in 1984 to institute charges for most IFS publications. For the period August 1984 to June 1985 receipts from sales totalling $39 155 were paid to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Trends in Expenditure

Analysis of expenditure over the five year period covered by the above table indicates some interesting trends. In terms of total expenditure, the average rate of annual increase has been 12.3 per cent between 1981–82 and 1984–85 (1980–81 has been omitted on the basis that it was the first year of operation so most staff positions were filled for only part of the year and other expenditure similarly reflects only part year costs). The real rate of increase is of course somewhat less after allowing for inflation effects.

The rate of increase for the Salaries item is determined by staff number increases, the most notable of which occurred in 1982–83 and 1983–84 when a total of 5 full-time and 2 part-time staff was added, and by arbitrated salary increases. For these reasons, expenditure under this item is fixed. Flexibility only exists in the sense that a staff member leaving may be replaced at a different level. Changes by the government to human resource budgetting procedures aimed at increasing flexibility have relatively little benefit for an organisation of this size. Any remaining flexibility is lost by a prohibition on transferring funds between this and the Administrative Expenses item.

The area of the Institute's budget where flexibility does exist is Administrative Expenses although there are also elements here which are committed on an ongoing basis, for example, the rent component of Office Services, telephone rentals, maintenance on computing and other equipment and employer superannuation contributions. In order to assess the trend in discretionary funds made available to the Institute, the major fixed items such as superannuation contributions, rent and the special appropriation for the International Conference in 1984 should be disregarded. When this is done, and leaving aside 1980–81 as that was not a full year of operation, the funds available for research and information dissemination activities, or for functions in support of those activities, have been as follows:

Table 2.2

1981–82	*1982–83*	*1983–84*	*1984–85*
$623 401	$809 175	$863 729	$895 720

In money terms the rates of increase have been 29.8 per cent between 1981–82 and 1982–83; 6.7 per cent between 1982–83 and 1983–84; and 3.7 per cent between 1983–84 and 1984–85. This means that in real terms, there has actually been a reduction in funding since 1982–83; a trend which is all the more alarming when the likely appropriation for 1985–86 is considered. In the coming year, discretionary funding levels determined in the same manner as for previous years in the above table

will be approximately $440 600, a decrease in money terms of over 50 per cent against 1984–85. Again the real reduction is even greater.

In summary, the trend in funds appropriated to the Institute over the five year period of its existence shows an overall increase from year to year. However, an examination of discretionary funding indicates a pattern of growth only from 1980–81 to 1982–83 and a disturbing decline in real terms since. The effects of that decline are discussed elsewhere in this report.

Operations

The Institute of Family Studies is organized around broad project areas which meet its statutory functions 'to promote, by the conduct, encouragement and coordination of research and other appropriate means, the identification of, and development of understanding of, the factors affecting marital and family stability in Australia, with the object of promoting the protection of the family as the natural and fundamental group unit in society'.

With two servicing units in administration and computing to assist all projects, and the Family Information Centre providing library and database facilities, handling public inquiries and coordinating the publication/ dissemination activities of the Institute, the following six broad areas serve as a focus for the Institute's work:

- Social Structure and Family Process
- Family Law
- Children in Families
- Family Support
- Family Policies
- Research Development.

Social Structure and Family Process

The Institute's first task was to develop a picture of what was happening in and to Australian families. If policy-makers and the wider public are to understand better what affects marital and family stability, an accurate and comprehensive data base on family life must be the starting point. Surprisingly, no such data base existed in 1980, apart from Census data and other ABS surveys which had a very incomplete classification of families, and a few academic research studies focusing on limited areas such as fertility.

Thus the Institute designed a comprehensive program of research

which would provide a 'descriptive map' of Australian family life and which would also offer some explanation of what was happening. Suffice to say, in this context, that explanations are likely to involve broad structural changes in the society itself, such as population trends and age structures, migration, employment patterns, the role of women, economic changes and so on. So the Institute's research, of necessity, had to look at family-based decision-making, behaviour and values in the context of these wider social forces. If marital breakdown or family poverty, violence, the well-being of children are to be affected by government policy initiatives, the 'causes' or 'correlates' need to be known so that if desired, changes to the direction of their impact on families can be effected.

But explanations of family change will also lie within family life, in the personal values and family processes that people create in their private lives. In a sense the family is the central 'crucible of change' for it is there that people work out their responses to broad social and economic factors affecting them. Each family 'makes' its way in the world, choosing and rejecting various options and paths to follow, sorting out their own solutions to the challenges of changing obligations, economic circumstances or new values about male and female roles. Without such a knowledge base which monitors changes in family values and behaviour in an ongoing and systematic way, decisions by government on policies must be chancy and likely to fly in the face of changing family realities.

The Institute's major vehicles for this monitoring of 'social structure and family process' are:

- The Australian Family Formation Project
- The Work and Family Functioning Project
- The Australian Family Indicators Project.

Australian Family Formation Project (AFF)

1981–82 Australian Family Formation Survey

This was the first major IFS research project designed in 1980 and implemented in the 1981–82 AFF Survey. A national sample of 2500 young people in the key 'family formation' years (18–34) were interviewed in detail about factors influencing their decisions to leave home, to establish sexual relationships, to marry and to have children. The study was designed to detect changes and trends in these processes in Australia in the 1980s, so follow-up surveys of the same sample are planned.

The interview schedule was divided into the following categories: present household structure, childhood family background and mobility, parents' characteristics, the respondent's (and partner's) characteristics including education, occupational history, living at home and leaving, relationships and sex patterns, children and families, attitudes to various social issues, and socio-economic indicators.

Lack of adequate staff and funding have prevented the Institute from completing the second stage follow-up survey but it is still planned to do this when funds permit.

The initial survey data have been analysed extensively and major reports have been written. Lack of adequate funding for the Institute has prevented publication of some of these reports but media releases, journal articles and extensive media commentary have ensured some dissemination of the results.

'Youth Leaving Home' is a detailed report based on the AFF 1981–82 Survey data on changing patterns in the transition from youth to independent adulthood. Given the present high levels of youth unemployment, alienation and anti-social behaviour, the findings are very policy relevant. In brief, the study finds a marked shift in the process of leaving home which has major social consequences for Australia. Whereas marriage once marked entry into an independent adult life and the transition passage was a clear sequence of completing school, getting a job, leaving home to get married, young people in the 1980s are leaving home earlier (often for reasons of conflict with parents), living alone or in groups on meagre incomes, often unemployed, returning to parents only to leave again because of renewed conflict. Such a 'staggered' pattern of leaving home relates to high levels of youth homelessness and lack of support (see section on Family Policies), to the increasing incidence of 'living together' (a more tenuous state than 'de facto marriage'), to delay in marriage and having children because of doubt, insecurity and an unpredictable future. Parents suffer the burden of 'the never-empty nest' and are often confused and resentful themselves because they fail to understand present-day obstacles in the path of the successful attainment of adult status.

This major report has been written for the Institute by Dr Christabel Young of the Australian National University, but cannot be published because of budget cutbacks. A related paper by Don Edgar and Frank Maas, entitled 'Adolescent competence, leaving home and changing family patterns', was presented at the XXth International Committee on Family Research Seminar held in Melbourne under IFS sponsorship in August 1984. It details the policy implications of these findings for education, training and re-training.

'Living Together' is a Working Paper based on the AFF 1981–82 Survey data, written by Dr Siew-Ean Khoo of the Australian National University. Details of all those in the national sample who were then living together rather than married or living alone reveal clear differences between the young unemployed, the separated or divorced, and those others in the sample who were married or not yet in any relationship. This paper too is in type-set form but cannot be printed for lack of funds.

Family Formation and Ethnicity, another Working Paper by Dr Siew-Ean Khoo based on the 1981–82 AFF survey data, has been published as IFS Working Paper No.9, it compares those of Australian background with young people from various migrant backgrounds. The paper shatters several 'myths' about the family values of Australia's multicultural community.

The book, *Ethnic Family Values in Australia* compiled by the Institute was published by Prentice-Hall. In planning the Australian Family Formation Project, the Institute realized that those from different ethnic backgrounds would be influenced by widely varying family values and moral standards. It was predicted that the national AFF sample of young people would include proportionate numbers of those with migrant backgrounds, but not in sufficient numbers or detail to make the finer distinctions. The Institute therefore contracted several external academic experts to write papers on major ethnic groups, covering what was known about family values and divorce laws in their countries of origin and in their Australian communities. Attitudes to male/female sex roles, sex, marriage, divorce, family relationships, the importance of religion and 'traditional' ethnic values were all examined through available research literature on some fourteen ethnic groups in Australia. This book is predicted to go to a second edition because of widespread public demand.

'Entry into Marriage' is another book-length manuscript based on the AFF Survey, ready to publish but for available funds. A commercial publisher is being sought but this will inevitably delay public dissemination of the findings. Written by Dr Gordon Carmichael, of the Institute's staff, this report outlines how entry into marriage has changed in recent years because of changing pressures facing young people and changing social values. Living together prior to marriage seems to have become part of the 'courtship ritual', and though the prediction is that approximately 20 per cent of young Australians may never marry (thus reversing the 'marriage boom' of the post-war years), there is still widespread affirmation of the institution of marriage.

'Young Marriages' is a separate study related to the Australian Family Formation Project. Sixty young married couples with children were selected from the Melbourne segment of the national AFF sample. A very detailed interview schedule was designed to explore how these young couples adapt their expectations to the realities of married life, how well they communicate, how they negotiate conflict and how they handle family-related responsibilities. Because the interviews focus on intimate family processes, it is very revealing in terms of what factors lead to marital harmony or instability. The study reveals how difficult all personal relationships are, shows some of the approaches to marital partnership that 'work' versus those that do not. The study also suggests that it is not marriage per se which disadvantages women but the bearing and rearing of children which has a dramatic and often negative impact on marital relationships. We shall have to seek an external publisher for this report also.

Australian Family Formation Follow-up Survey

The Australian Family Formation Project depends, for its maximum impact, upon longitudinal follow-ups to the 1981–82 panel of respondents. Yet we have had to postpone the follow-up for two years because of funding restrictions. Since the initial survey asked whether people intended to partner, to marry, to have children (and why or why not), it is important to discover whether they actually carry out these intentions and, if not, why the change. For example, if many who said they hoped to marry within two years have not in fact married, is that because of changing values about marriage and family life, or is it because their financial and employment circumstances have prevented them from so doing? What policies and programs might help people achieve their goals? For example, would permanent part-time work, better child care, more flexible shopping hours help women maintain better their dual aims of having children as well as a career?

The Institute is still determined to conduct this follow-up survey, since it has clear policy implications and will give a better picture of family formation processes than anyone has been able to obtain heretofore, but that determination requires sufficient funds to be translated into research action. It seems to us to be most wasteful and short-sighted to allow this unique opportunity to be lost to the nation.

Work and Family Functioning Project

Work and Family Functioning Survey

Several aspects of the Institute's research so far have revolved around the work-family relationship, but we have wanted to consolidate this in one major study because of its important policy ramifications.

The Australian government's ratification of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities recognises the centrality of the work-family nexus, with effects operating both ways, from family pressures to job performance and from the demands of employment back on to family processes and family survival. Indeed, the Institute sees this issue of carrying concurrent responsibilities for acquiring and managing income, nurturing children and managing a household as the most crucial family policy issue of the next decade and beyond. Changing work structures, changing sex roles and social values and changing family relationships require a more integrated family policy perspective than ever before.

This Institute intends to document through its Work and Family Functioning Project how families now organise their family and work lives given available resources and constraints. In particular, the study will examine how family functioning is affected by the presence of children at various ages, the labour force participation of parents, and the economic and personal resources available to the family. Such a study will show us how well (or how badly) families are coping as viable economic and social units.

Because our funding has been so drastically reduced we will be able to proceed only in a limited way, using detailed family case studies to develop methodology for a large-scale study. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data on income and household expenditure will help us in these preliminary tasks, but a qualitative picture of how families manage their tasks, time and other resources is needed. These will be mapped against a range of outcomes or effects, both behavioural and emotional, on family survival, with a view to making clear policy recommendations about how to support families more effectively in their chosen tasks.

Maternity Leave Study

Funding from the Federal Government's Women's Research and Employment Initiatives Program (WREIP) has enabled work to start on one aspect at least of this wider project. The Institute of Family Studies has been commissioned under WREIP to conduct two studies on maternity leave. The first study will survey the extent of use of maternity leave by employees in both the public and private sectors, using a sample from the Victorian Register of Births to examine which women in what occupational groups take up maternity leave provisions, and the reasons why some do not bother.

The second study will examine the advantages and difficulties experienced by employers and employees as a result of current maternity leave provisions.

These studies have clear policy implications and have the support of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Confederation of Australian Industry and the Women's Bureau of the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations which invited and funded the Institute to do them.

In addition to a grant of $50 000 from the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, the Institute will be contributing substantial resources to this study by providing research expertise and personnel, computer time and general administrative services to the project.

Maternity leave provisions began being introduced into Federal and State awards in 1979. However, except for the public sector there is very little information available on

the number of women workers using maternity leave and its effects on employers generally. These studies will attempt to redress this situation.

With the number of married women with children, or single parents with children, increasing in the workforce the questions of accessibility of paid and unpaid maternity and parental leave and the effects of this leave on both employees and employers become important issues to understand and evaluate.

Australian Family Indicators Project

With the impending upgrade of on-site computing facilities and installation of a link with the Attorney-General's Department computer in Canberra, the Institute's capacity to manipulate large data sets will shortly be greatly enhanced. Anticipating these improved facilities, preliminary work has begun on the establishment of an Australian Family Indicators Database. The aim of this project is to draw together existing data relating to families in Australia, especially data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and to make these data available in forms which will permit their more effective use.

The database will draw on annual series such as those relating to marriages, divorces, births and deaths; on the five-yearly population censuses; on the regular labour force surveys, and on irregular surveys dealing with topics such as incomes, household expenditure, child care and families. A particular emphasis will be placed on time series which can be updated as new data come to hand. The full potential of a number of ABS data sets for shedding light on family life and family processes in Australia is far from being realised at present. It is intended that the new database will both help to remedy this situation and serve to concentrate statistical information on families in a single source.

The Institute is involved in ongoing negotiations with the ABS with a view to having data sets released in forms which will suit the needs of family researchers generally and of the Australian Family Indicators Project specifically. Institute staff regularly contribute to the development of ABS collections, having, in particular, played a major role in the development of family questions for the 1986 Census. In consequence, a much broader range of family information will be available from that Census than has been available from previous ones.

Family Law

The Institute of Family Studies was not set up as a legal body but must take account of the way the law as such affects marital and family stability. The *Family Law Act* 1975 was seen as a type of compact between the Family Court, the Family Law Council (whose job is to advise on the operation of the law) and the Institute of Family Studies whose research was to help identify factors having both positive and adverse effects on family stability. Inevitably then, the Institute's research must involve some aspects of the operation of the law, if only to see whether fears expressed that the new no fault divorce law would itself damage the institutions of marriage and the family, are justified.

However the Institute has taken from the outset a broader view of family law. Our goal in this area is to integrate the disparate elements of the law as it affects families and

their members. Adoption legislation, child welfare procedures, equal rights, property law, a whole variety of socio-legal procedures are likely to affect the extent to which families can survive as intact units and how they actually function. Much of this involves bringing a socio-legal perspective to other studies, along with economic, sociological and psychological perspectives, but some research more specifically focused on perceptions of the law and the actual impact of the law on families is clearly necessary.

Family Reformation Project

Designed as one of the three main branches of the Institute's Seven Year Research Plan (see Annual Report for 1980–81), the Family Reformation Project represents the opposite end of the family formation process. We did not want merely to look at separation and divorce, though dissolution of marriages and families is important to understand. Rather, we wanted to look closely at how people re-form their family lives, choosing new partners, new ways of life, facing new economic strains which affect their well-being. Several focused surveys have been conducted already to document changes of this kind.

The Economic Consequences of Marriage Breakdown Survey

In June 1983, the Attorney-General of Australia referred the issue of matrimonial property to the Law Reform Commission with Terms of Reference which required a consideration of whether any changes should be made to the present law, the *Family Law Act* 1975.

In particular, the Commission was asked to consider proposals for equal sharing of the spouses' property. Under the present law when a marriage breaks down and the couple cannot agree over property arrangements, the Family Court is given a wide discretion to re-allocate all of the couple's property between them in a just and equitable way, taking into account the contributions each has made during the marriage, whether financial or non-financial, and their future needs.

Those calling for change have criticized the present system on the grounds that it leads to uncertainty and undue expense and that it does not provide clear guidelines to those involved. It has also been said by some critics to disadvantage women and by others to disadvantage men. As there had never been a systematic study in Australia of the economic consequences of marriage breakdown and of attitudes to the present law, there was an evident need for information to be gathered on these issues.

The Australian Institute of Family Studies had been planning to conduct a survey on the economic effects of divorce as part of its ongoing Family Reformation Project. In discussions preceding the Matrimonial Property Reference to the Law Reform Commission, it was agreed that the Institute should focus much of this survey on the process and impact of matrimonial property division. The survey would thus meet the needs of the Law Reform Commission while at the same time fulfilling the Institute's function to investigate factors affecting marital and family stability in Australia.

The survey was funded entirely by the Institute but benefited greatly from input from the Law Reform Commission team and members of the Family Court. Without the cooperation of the Chief Judge, Justice Elizabeth Evatt, and Principal Registrar, Mr

Brian Knox, the survey would not have been possible and we are extremely pleased with the results of this massive cooperative effort.

The principal aims of the survey are:

- to examine the impact of divorce on the standards of living of those involved: the husband, the wife, and the children;
- to describe the property division and the factors which influenced the nature of the settlement;
- to investigate the extent to which couples, in settling their property matters, used the various types of legal process possible under the law, ranging from division of property with no intervention of lawyers or the Court through to a full, contested hearing before a judge;
- to assess attitudes to the law and the legal procedures both in general terms and in relation to the particular case of the person interviewed; and
- to balance the financial emphasis of the study with an assessment of how people felt about various aspects of their lives in the year before separation, in the immediate post-separation period and at the time of interview.

In order to best meet the aims of the survey within the resources available, attention was focused on three groups of divorced couples:

- younger couples divorced in 1981 with children;
- younger couples divorced in 1983 with children; and
- older couples divorced in 1981.

In all, 825 interviews were conducted consisting of 369 men and 456 women and including 128 husband-wife couples. Interviews were carried out from May to August 1984.

The findings of the survey are presented in the book, *Settling up : property and income distribution on divorce in Australia*, soon to be published by Prentice-Hall of Australia. A summary entitled, *The economic consequences of marriage breakdown: a summary* has been published and is available from the Institute of Family Studies.

The major finding of the survey was that there is a vast difference in the post-separation incomes of husbands and wives. Most husbands had either retained their pre-separation income level or substantially improved it. Most women on the other hand, particularly those who were not working at the time of the separation and had not repartnered, had experienced a major drop in income. In most cases, the man retains the major income-earning capacity of the partnership while the woman retains most of the cost burden of raising children born of the marriage. Over 50 per cent of sole parent families headed by women were poor; children in these poor families had not been poor before the break-up of the marriage.

Most of these women were receiving the Supporting Parent's Benefit or the Widow's Pension. They were unable to improve their income circumstances because they had difficulty in finding jobs which paid sufficient income to counter the costs of child care and the high marginal tax rates associated with social security payments. Their difficulty in finding suitable jobs was directly related to the interruptions to their employment history caused by the time they had spent caring for children during the marriage. In contrast, men had had uninterrupted work histories and were thus able to continue their careers after the separation.

The implication of this finding is that equality of shares of property usually falls a long way short of achieving equality of living standards for men and women after divorce.

A second major finding was that divorced persons prefer a system of property division which allows some discretion to the Court to vary shares as opposed to a system in which property is divided on a strict 50/50 basis.

Aside from these, the findings of the survey are too numerous to list here but in the reports of the survey, information is provided on the break-up and reformation of families, changes in housing, changes in household and personal incomes, life-time employment experiences of men and women, levels of wealth and types of property held during marriage, ownership of property during marriage, percentage shares of property distributed on divorce and determinants of shares, treatment of superannuation, special issues related to businesses and farms, the legal processes that people used, evaluations of different aspects of the legal system, maintenance, custody and access, attitudes to matrimonial property law, motivations and perceptions, and future directions for law reform and social policy.

As the first systematic study in Australia of the economic consequences of divorce and as the most comprehensive study of its type ever undertaken in any country, the survey has attracted considerable attention both nationally and internationally. We consider that the speed and skill with which the survey has been completed demonstrate the importance of the Institute of Family

Studies to governments and the community in providing reliable information for the determination of policies for families.

1981–82 Marriage Breakdown Survey

Plans to complete the writing up and publication of results of the Institute's earlier study of divorced people have been delayed through having to concentrate resources on the Economic Consequences of Marriage Breakdown survey. The Marriage Breakdown survey involves interviews with 295 (171 men and 124 women) randomly selected people who were divorced in 1979 through the Melbourne, Parramatta and Perth Family Courts. Many interesting characteristics of the process of marriage breakdown, people's progress through the court system and their reactions to the ending of their marriage have emerged. A summary description of the major findings was provided in the 1982–83 Annual Report.

While the survey and its findings have received a good deal of public exposure through conference papers and media publicity, it is a matter of concern that a full report has not yet been produced. Substantially this has been a direct result of insufficient staff and financial resources, a problem which will still exist even after the Economic Consequences of Marriage Breakdown survey has been completed. While staff will then be available to complete writing up the report, no funds are available for publishing in 1985–86. As in a number of other areas, the Institute is pursuing other avenues for releasing the information including commercial publishers and journal articles. Further delays will occur as a result of commercial publication, but no alternative is available.

1982–83 Adolescents in Divorce Survey

A study of adolescents in the divorce process was conducted for the Institute by Rosemary Dunlop and Ailsa Burns of Macquarie University. The aim of this research was to study the adolescent experience of divorce and to compare the adjustment of these teenagers with adolescents from similar backgrounds who live in intact two-parent families. Several standardised measures of various aspects of adjustment were used in conjunction with semi-structured interviews of the adolescent and a parent; where possible both parents were interviewed.

As Dunlop and Burns state:

> It is widely believed that teenagers from broken homes are more likely to be maladjusted than those from intact families. Little is really known about whether this is merely a stereotype, or whether it has a firm basis in reality. Studies of juvenile delinquents, reports of clinicians working with disturbed youngsters and surveys of homeless boys and girls have all reported a high incidence of disrupted family life. These findings are alarming, but what is often overlooked is that the studies start with a group that is already defined as a problem. Very little is known about the far greater numbers of children who do not end up in the juvenile courts, at the psychiatrist, or on the streets.

The sample for this survey consists of 41 adolescents from intact families who were recruited from high schools in Sydney and 40 from divorcing families who were contacted through the Family Court. Parents in the divorcing group had been separated on average 18 months before the interview. This is a longitudinal study which examines the experience of these adolescents over time.

Data from this first stage have now been analysed and the first report is written and awaiting publication.

The main result of the analysis to date has been to refute the view that a teenager from a divorced family is significantly more likely than one from an intact family to be psychologically disturbed. No differences on a whole series of adjustment measures between the adolescents in the representative sample of divorcing families and those from a comparable group of intact homes were found. This does not mean that there are no disturbed children among these adolescents, but that there are similar proportions of disturbed and well-adjusted teenagers in both groups.

The findings do not suggest that divorce has no effect on adolescents. To gain an insight into the more complex and subtle consequences of divorce, and the patterns within families that may make the experience easier or more painful, a qualitative analysis of individual case histories has been undertaken.

Most children from the original sample have been contacted and re-interviewed. There is an 81 per cent retention rate overall. Although parents are willing to take part in this stage of the study Institute funds are not sufficient to allow this. Data are being coded for computer analysis and it is expected that a report should be completed by the end of 1985 or early in 1986.

1982/83 Young Children in Divorce Study

The second IFS contracted study of children in divorce has been conducted by Geoff Smiley, Edna Chamberlain and Len Dalgleish in conjunction with an advisory committee from the Social Work Department of the University of Queensland. Their sample includes children 6–8 years old at the time of their parents' separation. The

intention was to sample one group of children about 1 year after separation and another group 2 to 3 years after separation. This sample was to be matched for socio-economic characteristics, sex and age, with children from intact families. Both sampling and interviewing such a group involves great difficulties and there were problems in obtaining the sample of children of the correct age and time span from separated and divorced families.

The focus of this study is the social and economic changes which may occur after separation and divorce and the way in which teachers perceive these children. Little difference was found in the self esteem and reading scores of children whose parents had divorced and those of the control group; teachers also reported no major differences. However, this study did indicate that the families of the children whose parents had divorced or separated experienced difficulties with finances, employment, housing, child care and family support.

Family Law Statistics Project

Since its establishment the Institute of Family Studies has been concerned about the lack of coordination in the collection of family law data and a lack of agreement amongst those involved in the family law area about the uses to which such data may be put and the extent of accessibility to them. There have even been misunderstandings about definitions of terms and the manner in which court applications should be counted. The Annual Report of the Family Law Council has frequently referred to the lack of reliable statistics (particularly in defended Family Court matters) as has that of the Institute. As a result, research has been hampered, commonly asked questions cannot be answered and the amount of information that might otherwise be available has been restricted.

Family law data can include matters such as divorce, custody and maintenance which are dealt with in the *Family Law Act*, plus State matters such as adoption, fostering and the registration of births, and (re)marriages. The Institute's proposal has been to concentrate solely at this stage on *Family Law Act* matters, both those which are instituted in the Family Court and those dealt with by courts of summary jurisdiction. Statistics emanating from these lower courts have been particularly difficult to interpret because of differing modes of collection in the States responsible for them.

In the past three years various moves have been made to improve the statistical system:

- the Family Court of Australia has been developing its computerization program. Despite several delays, it is currently expected that all registries of the court will be computerized by 1988. Margaret Harrison and Gordon Bruff, representing the Institute and the Family Law Council respectively, have met with members of the Court Computer Implementation Committee and recommended that several items be included in the data base;
- a sub-committee of the Family Law Council, which included staff members of the Institute, the Family Law Branch of the Attorney-General's Department and the Family Court of Australia, met to consider the statistics being collected by the court, to isolate the terms which needed standardization and to try to define them. Subsequently the sub-committee drafted a set of standardized procedures for listing cases;

- as a result of several meetings with Institute staff, the Judges' Rules Committee of the Family Court and the Family Law Council, the Application for Dissolution of Marriage (Form 4) was amended to include items such as the occupation of the husband and wife and the presence of offspring of the marriage who were over 18 at the time of the application. Unfortunately one item that had been agreed to — the place of residence at the time of separation — was inadvertently omitted from the final form, but there are now assurances that it will be included in the near future.

The fact that several developments in the family law statistics area have been occurring virtually simultaneously, with some, but not all, relevant bodies included in the discussions and planning, plus the fact that already one important error has been made, reinforces the Institute's proposal that a committee to oversee the statistics should be established.

At its July 1985 meeting the Family Law Council agreed that its statistics sub-committee would continue as an advisory committee but that its membership would be widened to include representatives from the Institute, the Family Court, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Attorney-General's Department. The functions of that sub-committee are:

- to coordinate the collection of statistics in family law matters in relation to both the Family Courts and the Magistrates Courts;
- to advise on information being collected in the Family Court; and
- to advise on research projects being undertaken or planned and to suggest research projects which may be usefully undertaken.

The Legal Status of Children Project

The Institute has from the outset been concerned to document and monitor changes in the law and associated administrative procedures which affect the rights, status and well-being of children. We have provided reports on changes to adoption legislation, the rights of children, the legal status and relationships of stepchildren, children under the *Family Law Act*, the welfare and status of children born of reproductive technology procedures, such as 'test-tube babies' and artificial insemination by donor, and child sexual abuse. Our contribution to the annual *Diary of Social Legislation and Policy* provides a valuable summary also of key changes to State and Federal social legislation and policy.

Much of this work of necessity involves State by State comparisons and a critical look at anomalous provisions across the States in the context of Federal constitutional powers or lack of them. The Institute has sought to contribute to this important work in 1984–85 and in the coming year will undertake a review of the current position relating to the status of children.

Asche Committee Report on Reproductive Technology

In 1983 the Family Law Council, which advises the Attorney-General on matters relating to family law, established a committee to consider the issues relating to Artificial Insemination by Donor (AID), In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), Embryo Transfer (ET) and related matters, in order to advise the Attorney-General on the implications for Commonwealth legislation of those issues.

Since 1979, issues relating to Artificial Insemination by Donor and to AID children, parents and donors have been brought to the attention of the Family Law Council. In particular, the need to establish clearly the legal status of AID children, AID parents and the donor father has been stressed. Following the success of In Vitro Fertilization procedures in producing conceptions and then births, additional issues have been raised with respect to IVF children and their parents, particularly where donor sperm, ova or embryo are used. Further complications have arisen with respect to the question of surrogate motherhood and surrogacy contracts being entered into.

At the same time as questions of legal status were being raised, increasing attention has been focussed on the new reproductive technology of AID, IVF and other procedures and the speed at which new developments have occurred, both in research and in practice. In response to these developments the various States have established committees to examine and make recommendations with respect to the new reproductive technology and its implications for legislation, practice and the community.

Developing policy and legislative responses to the issues arising out of reproductive technology is made more complicated in Australia by the division of constitutional responsibility in family law matters. The need for an examination of these issues with respect to their implications for federal policy and legislation has, however, become evident — particularly in the light of the reports and recommendations arising out of the work of the various expert State Committees.

The Institute has substantially assisted the work of the Family Law Council's committee by providing staff time in the person of Research Fellow, Tricia Harper, to research and draft the report and to service the work of the Committee. The Chairman of the Committee is the Hon. Mr Justice Asche, Senior Judge of the Family Court in Melbourne and Presiding Member of the IFS Board of Management.

In July 1984, an interim report was prepared and presented to the Family Law Council and then to the Attorney-General.

In June 1985, the committee presented its final report to the Council entitled *Creating children : a uniform approach to the law and practice of reproductive technology in Australia.* The report contains some 31 recommendations and on the basis of its consideration of the report and its recommendations, the Family Law Council has reached the following conclusions:

- reproductive technology differs fundamentally from other recent developments in science, technology and bio-technology in that it enables the creation of new life, the creation of a child who would not otherwise be born — rather than simply sustaining and prolonging a life which already exists;
- recognition that the questions raised by reproductive technology which enables the creation of children and the formation of families are not exclusively or even primarily medical or scientific matters. Rather they raise fundamental social, moral, legal and ethical issues which involve the whole community;
- the welfare and interests of the child born of reproductive technology must be the paramount consideration. Reproductive technology procedures should only be administered when appropriate conditions exist for ensuring the welfare of the future child thus born;

- there must be full, informed and effective public participation in the evaluation of, and decision-making regarding, the research and practice of reproductive technology;
- there must be, as a matter of priority, a national approach to the issues arising out of reproductive technology;
- the importance of establishing a national council on reproductive technology to advise Australian Governments, Federal, State and Territory, and to provide such a national approach to the creation of children and families;
- the high cost to the public purse of funding reproductive technology programs requires, as a matter of priority, that urgent attention be given to establishing a clearly defined health care policy which establishes priorities for the allocation of health care funds;
- attention needs to be given to identifying the objectives of reproductive technology programs and to deciding for whom such services should be provided;
- as a matter of public policy, surrogacy arrangements should be prohibited;
- there should be a prohibition on experimentation on human embryos;
- the community needs to give careful consideration to the appropriateness of permitting the commercial exploitation of reproductive technology — and, if the latter is to be permitted, to its regulation.

The Attorney-General agreed to the recommendation of the Asche Committee and of the Family Law Council that the report be made public, and the Report, *Creating children*, was tabled in Federal Parliament on August 21, 1985.

Victorian Child Welfare Practice and Legislation Review Committee

A member of the staff of the Institute, Patricia Harper, was appointed, in her own right, as a member of the Review which presented its three volume Report to the Minister for Community Welfare Services and Attorney-General at the end of 1984, after 2 years intensive work. The Report proposes a set of principles to underlie child welfare legislation and practice in Victoria. The starting point should be a commitment to greater equality in the distribution of opportunities and resources for children, families and communities.

Allied with this, the Committee proposes to emphasise the centrality of families to the growth and development of the child. Steps must be taken to provide the social, emotional and economic opportunities which will enable families to better discharge their important, and crucial, responsibilities. The dignity, development and independence of parents, and their links with friends and the members of the community with whom they interact on a day-to-day basis, is fundamental to the provision of good quality preventive arrangements. The Committee, in particular, emphasises the need to see children as part of families and families as part of communities, in a balanced approach to the meeting of the wide variety of needs.

Report on the Status of Children

In response to the significant issues described above and other developments in relation to the status and relationships of children and their families, including, for example, adoption legislation changes and policy changes on the institutionalisation of children, the Institute proposes to review the current position relating to the status of

children. The review aims to draw together the legislative and policy changes of recent years, to analyse their impact on children and the respective family contexts in which they live, to report on the benefits/detriments children have sustained as a result, and to evaluate their current situation including any need for legislative change.

Both governments and parents have obligations and responsibilities for children. Their actions, however, do not always appear to take account of, indeed often run counter to, the rights and needs of children. Despite explicit directions in legislation and practice that the welfare of children should be paramount, for example, as in the *Family Law Act*, such provisions seem to be ignored on occasions. Protracted and bitter disputes over the custody of children often seem to have more to do with the needs or perceived 'rights' of parents than they do with the interests of the children involved. Until recent adoption legislation changes were effected, only lip-service was paid to the paramountcy of the welfare and interests of the child. The principle of the paramountcy of the welfare and interests of the child born of reproductive technology has yet to be recognised. These examples clearly indicate the need for examination and discussion of the status and relationship of children in families. The Institute is working toward a comprehensive report which will not only document the major legislative and administrative changes affecting children, but also outline the key philosophical, moral and social policy issues that arise with respect to the status of children in Australian society.

Children in Families

This area of the Institute's work focuses on the family resources available to meet children's needs and the impact on children of both parental and wider social influences. In particular, the Institute has aimed at research which highlights the need of all children for adequate family income, parental care, and for support from the community for parents in their child-rearing tasks. The underlying theme for this child-related research is the child's growth towards competence as an independent human being.

Australian Children in Families Project (ACIF)

1982–83 Australian Children in Families Survey

This survey was designed specifically to look at children's views of family life in different types of families and to gain insights into children's feelings about changes which occur in families. One report from the survey was published during the year and others are in preparation.

The child's eye view of family life, prepared as a report to respondents, but also designed to be read by a general audience, was launched by the Attorney-General, Mr Bowen in Canberra on 9 May, 1985. This report, based on interviews with the 402 children (half of whom were aged 15 or 16 years and the other half 8 or 9 years) in the study, covers children's views of their parents in intact two parent families, in one-parent families and in stepfamilies (including de facto stepfamilies). Children's feelings when their parents separated, how they now feel about the separation and divorce, and how they feel about and cope with the access parent are also examined. The report also covers many general aspects of family life such as organisation and rules, children's

friendships, television viewing and family changes. Children's outside interests, their views on school, teenagers and trouble with the law are also included.

There has been immense media interest in this report across Australia, including all national TV networks, radio stations, newspapers and magazines.

Children in Stepfamilies Report: As a result of the increase in the number of divorces in the 1970s and 1980s there has been an increase in the number of stepfamilies formed after divorce. This research compares the competence of children in stepfamilies with children in one-parent families and intact two-parent families on measures of reading, self esteem, and everyday life skills. In addition, as stepfamilies are complex in form, a comparison is made of family resources and family processes operating in stepfamilies in which children have high self esteem and those where children have low self esteem. Qualitative data available in both parent and child interviews will be used in this analysis.

Monograph on Parents in ACIF Survey: A parent in each of the 402 families included in the Australian Children in Families Study was interviewed. Half are parents of an adolescent aged 15 or 16 years at the time of interview, and half of a child aged 8 or 9 years at the time of interview. Although many of these parents have other children as well as the interviewed child, this research will concentrate on the experience of being the parent of the child in the study with his or her unique temperament and personality. Parenting values and styles and child competence will be examined. The experience of being a parent during marriage breakdown, living in a one-parent family and at remarriage will be examined. The effect of socio-economic status on child outcomes and satisfaction with parenting experiences will be taken into account.

This research will make use of the wealth of quantitative and qualitative data available in the Australian Children in Families survey and aims at giving a broader understanding of being a parent in modern day Australia. It will look at the satisfactions as well as the difficulties of being a parent.

Monograph on ACIF Survey: A more general report covering most of the content areas in the 1982–83 Australian Children in Families Survey is also being prepared. Content areas include parent-child relationships, family conflict and family cohesion, family types, family size, family socio-economic status, family-community linkages (school, neighbourhood, peer groups, clubs and organisations), and family physical (urban vs. rural) and cultural setting (ethnic group). The unifying themes in the monograph are child competence, family resources, and the active child. The monograph aims to:

- provide basic descriptive information on how children perceive and experience family life in a variety of circumstances; and
- to examine the relations between varying types and levels of family resources and the active development of competence in children.

The completion date for the report is the end of November. The Institute is currently arranging for a publisher.

Australian Children in Families Follow-Up Survey

The Institute would like to follow up the 402 children and families interviewed in 1982–83 with a second interview in 1986 if funds permit. Many of the younger children in the original survey were living in families of special interest: one-parent families, stepfamilies, low-income intact families, and conflictual intact families. Collecting data four years later will allow us to understand better how children adapt to these conditions over time. For example, very little is known about children's long-term adjustment to parental divorce or remarriage. In addition, the adolescents in the 1982–83 ACIF survey will be 19 and 20 in 1986, which means that they will have made the transition from secondary school to employment or further education. Little information is available about the processes through which decisions are made at this critical period of young peoples' lives. Longitudinal studies are still relatively rare in family research; yet the information they provide can be invaluable. The 1982–83 ACIF survey data would make an excellent 'baseline' against which results from a 1986 follow-up survey could be compared. Initiating the follow-up survey is contingent on adequate funding, and the Institute is currently seeking for sources of assistance.

Japanese Children in Families Study

In 1982 the Institute was visited by officials from the Hyogo Prefecture in Japan. They were interested in setting up a similar body modelled on the Australian Institute of Family Studies and were particularly keen on replicating in Japan our Children in Families Survey. The Hyogo Institute for the Study of Family Issues was established and the Institute's ACIF study adapted for Japanese families by Professor Masuda.

The Japanese interviewed 352 Grade 3 children, 8 or 9 years of age and 395 third year junior high school students in Hyogo Prefecture. A parent of each student was interviewed also. The results of the Japanese study have been translated into English by Midori Komobuchi who was a visiting fellow at the Australian Institute in 1983–84. Results of the Japanese study will be compared with Australian results on such questions as discipline, attitudes to parents, family rules, children's household help and support available to parents in a crisis.

The Hyogo Institute for the Study of Family Issues has already published a report on the Japanese data similar to *The child's eye view of family life* published here.

Cost of Children Project

In August 1984, the Institute published a Working Paper on the *Cost of children in Australia*. This arose initially from a suggestion by the Family Law Council that more accurate information was needed on how much it costs parents to rear children, especially insofar as child maintenance arrangements are affected. In the Family Court, a rough guideline figure of $20 per week per child seems to have been used in maintenance awards, yet no evidence existed to support assertions that such an amount was too low.

Australia's household expenditure surveys give only a general idea of cost differentials for families of varying size, and adequate poverty lines await re-working of equivalence scales – something the Institute sees as a high priority task. In the meantime, we decided to use a simple basket of goods, 'minimal cost' approach to make a start in this area. Using dieticians' recommendations for minimum weekly nutrition intake, plus

minimum yearly clothing for these age groups, we were able to provide absolute bare minimum costs for children aged 2, 5, 8, 11 and for teenagers. These costs range from $16.69 per week for a two-year-old to $41.48 for a teenager at a low income 'bare minimum' level, and from $25.11 per week for a two-year-old to $45.90 for a teenager at a slightly more generous middle income level.

These results are simple but startling and have already had a major impact on divorce settlement negotiations. Lawyers, judges and registrars around the nation now use these figures to demonstrate how inaccurate and inadequate are many of the suggested levels of maintenance payments. The findings are important too in that they demonstrate another simple but ignored fact – that children cost more as they grow older. None of the government's child-related welfare payments or the tax adjustment measure of family allowances is varied for the age of the child. Nor are they indexed to changes in the cost of living. These are matters of great concern given the Institute's finding that between the 1978–79 and the 1981–82 Income Surveys, there has been a 54.4 per cent increase in the number of couples with children living on incomes below the labour force poverty line and a 38.6 per cent increase in the number of one parent families living below the poverty line. In our submissions to the Economic Planning Advisory Council (EPAC) for the 1985 Tax Summit, we used these findings to argue for a more integrated system of 'family support payments' based on equivalence scales for families of different sizes and caring responsibilities.

One further development in the Cost of Children Project is worth reporting. The Victorian Catholic Education Office has asked the Institute to advise on a planned study of the cost to parents of sending their children to a church school. We have suggested using the same 'minimal cost' approach, for schools of high, medium and low fees and using a comparison group of children attending state schools in the same areas. This small study will be useful in expanding on our costing of basic food and clothing and will be relevant to current debates on schools funding and educational disadvantage.

Education and Families Project

Education is obviously a key factor in explaining family well-being in that parental education levels affect their values, their child-rearing behaviour, their forms of communication, their occupation and income levels and their capacity to take advantage of social provisions for family support. Thus all of the Institute's studies have been careful to document educational levels and types so these can be related to such family outcomes.

The other side of our work in this area consists of examining those deliberate educational efforts to improve marital and family stability and to educate the public, students or professionals about family life.

Several initiatives of this kind have developed considerably during 1984–85.

Survey of Human Relations Education in Schools

In recognition that schools have an essential role in providing learning experiences to help young people acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to form and maintain positive relationships, the Institute undertook a study to assess the status of human relations education in the schools. Since the 1975 Royal Commission on Human

Relationships investigated what schools were doing to prepare young people for their lives as future partners and parents, little has been done to explore the Commission's conclusion that 'formal education in human relationships is in its infancy'.

The focus of this review was on Commonwealth and State education policies and programs in human relations education although, where possible, information was also obtained from the Catholic and independent systems.

Questions addressed in the study framework included:

- number and types of programs in each State
- guidelines, rationale, aims and objectives of programs
- curriculum content, materials, resources
- teacher training
- parent and community involvement
- evaluation
- relevance of course to trends in marriage and family life in today's social context.

Questionnaires were sent to each State Director of Education, to the Catholic School Commission and the Association of Independent Schools. Statements of policy or concerns were elicited from organisations with significant connections to school affairs, for example, High School and Primary Principals' Associations, Parents' Councils and Teachers' Unions. Follow up interviews were held with senior curriculum officers in all States. A limited number of school visits was made.

The continued trend towards decentralization of curriculum decision-making and implementation to local school authorities hampered obtaining a comprehensive perspective of the quantity and quality of human relations education. Despite the existence of advisory committees or curriculum units within Departments of Education, there is little documentation or monitoring of what is actually taught in schools. Only a school-by-school survey in each State could have achieved a level of accuracy in the prevalence of programs.

Human relations education is not a discretely defined entity but encompasses content and concepts found across the entire curriculum spectrum, both formal and informal. Generally the umbrella term incorporates themes related to the development of self esteem, an understanding of human sexuality, the emotional and social aspects of interpersonal relationships, and knowledge about family processes and dynamics. Common components also include the basic life skills of communication, problem solving, decision-making and conflict resolution.

Preliminary analysis confirmed that aspects of what is commonly labelled human relations education would be taught in some form in a number of subject areas at different grade levels in most schools. Most frequently human relations content is incorporated into health, social studies or home economics subject areas.

State guidelines, where they exist, for health and human relations education are broad and each school has some autonomy in implementing the suggested curriculum. Even where a health or human relations course is recommended or mandated, parents in all States have the right to have their child excused from the sex education or any other component deemed controversial. Provision of comprehensive human relationships curriculum guidelines does not guarantee that the aims and objectives will be

implemented in any individual school. More sensitive or controversial themes may be ignored or brushed over lightly. Competing schedules for subject time, teacher confidence and competence, as well as community pressures, will affect how thorough and widespread programs are in any locality.

Always controversial, the sex education components of human relations courses have raised community awareness and sometimes generated antagonism and created distrust or tension between schools and parents. Only when adequate parent and community involvement has been achieved have courses been accepted and programs supported. Almost all the States have established procedures for review of materials and curriculum by parents and for community consultation. Debate has centred mainly around values and philosophy towards sexuality and family dynamics inherent in the materials used, or the attitudes of the instructors. Opposition has come from parents concerned about the multiplicity of values taught and the treatment of topics such as homosexuality, abortion or divorce in a classroom setting.

Innovative programs exist in all State, Catholic and Independent systems at the individual school level. Successful implementation of programs appears dependent on the availability, enthusiasm and training of individual teachers in a school who receive encouragement and support from the principal. If a trained teacher leaves a school, the program often disappears from the curriculum.

The overall impression is one of a fragmented and uncoordinated approach to integrating human relations content into the total school curriculum. Conflicting community demands and expectations of what kind of education schools are to provide, and for what purpose, generates confusion in priorities and focus. A report on this study will be published later in 1985, if funds permit.

Family Studies Education Exchange (FSEE)

The Family Studies Education Exchange resulted from a workshop convened by the Institute in early 1984 in conjunction with the Institute of Early Childhood Development, Melbourne College of Advanced Education, for educators of people whose work would bring them in touch with families. The Workshop participants recommended the establishment of an educators' network which would facilitate the exchange and distribution of ideas and resources bearing upon family studies.

The Institute was able to take up this suggestion with the help of a Visiting Fellow. From August to November 1984, Mary Mannison from the Department of Psychology, Brisbane College of Advanced Education, canvassed 550 educators representing all major tertiary institutions in Australia about their family studies courses and materials. The disciplines targeted included anthropology, behavioural science, child care and development, counselling, education, law, medicine, psychology, sociology, urban and regional planning and other course groupings which require an understanding of families, their behaviour and changing structure. Lecturers in these courses were asked to participate in the Family Studies Education Exchange by contributing their course outlines, some indication of the teaching methods and resources used, and the nature of projects and assignments set.

From this came a summary of course outlines, reading and requirements in courses covering aspects of family relationships which are being taught in Australian universities and colleges. These summary course outlines were printed and circulated

to participants in the Exchange and the publication is available to any others who enquire about belonging. People interested in further interchange of ideas are asked to contact FSE Exchange members direct.

An additional publication which resulted from Mary Mannison's work on the FSE Exchange project was an unique listing of available films and videos which could be useful in teaching about family relationships, adolescence, stepfamilies, and other family topics.

The amount of informal contact which this project stimulated amongst educators is difficult to assess. Certainly course outlines continue to arrive at the Institute from prospective participants. The current funding difficulties impede the continual updating required to keep an Exchange of this type alive and functioning.

Family Related School Curriculum Materials Development

As indicated later in this report, students are among the major users of the Institute's Family Information Centre. Their demands and the needs of teachers and students in school courses on social studies, human development, home economics, legal studies, Australian studies and so on, cannot be met adequately by this Institute. The Institute is not a curriculum development centre, nor are the staff school curriculum experts. Other State and Federal agencies are better equipped and specially designed to develop suitable materials for school-based family studies courses.

So the approach here has been to make available to such bodies all of the Institute's findings and collected family materials so they can adapt them for primary and secondary student and teacher use.

Each year several Institute staff members have addressed conferences and workshops for curriculum officers, school teachers and administrators on the Institute's work and available resources. Articles have been published in teachers' journals and magazines to further spread the word.

A promising initiative by the Brisbane South Region to obtain Schools Commission funding under their 'Projects of National Significance' was supported by the Institute, but did not eventuate. This would have involved a special workshop for curriculum experts, followed by the secondment of two or three of them to the Institute for a period to 'convert', under guidance, the Institute's more adult-oriented publications into charts, pamphlets, case studies and tapes, to be used in primary and secondary schools. A teachers' guide to family trends was also planned.

With the reactivation of the Commonwealth's Curriculum Development Centre, the Institute has once again made the offer that its work be used for school curriculum purposes. The Participation and Equity Program and the Australian Studies Project would both particularly benefit from the development of family studies curriculum materials.

Contact has also been made with the Australian Council for Educational Research, and its parallel body in New Zealand, to produce sets of curriculum materials for schools. Both these bodies are also interested in expanding provision of materials on parenting and the Institute will assist them in every way possible.

Family Support

As indicated in our call for endorsement of the Institute's functions in the Annual Report for 1983–84, one of our main overall roles is 'to suggest and encourage the development of improved methods of family support, including measures preventive of family disruption, education processes and ways in which families can better meet the criteria of equal human rights now embodied in Australian legislation'.

The Institute's approach includes, but is broader than, the 'welfare' end of family support. It is essentially a preventive approach, stressing the need of all families for both informal support from relatives, friends, neighbours and (especially where these are lacking), the need for formal community support structures. In any complex society no family can survive alone and it is often forgotten by those who urge self-help and the sanctity of the private family that they too benefit from public provision of health care, education, transport, communication, and so on. Disagreements may concern the level of public versus private support, but the bottom line is that every family depends upon others for survival and the enrichment of their lives.

The Institute's work in the Family Support area covers both external supports for the family (for example, employment policies, work conditions and child care provisions as they affect family functioning), and internal aspects such as how family networks vary in their capacity and willingness to cope with family members' needs.

In a sense, all of the Institute's research leads towards an improved system of family support, but some studies have focused specifically on this area.

Family Support Networks Project

In 1982–83 the Institute designed and carried out a study based in the Geelong area of Victoria to try to determine:

- the degree to which, and the purposes for which, families draw on informal support networks;
- the characteristics of these networks and the factors influencing them;
- the nature of relationships between informal support networks and formal agencies of service delivery; and
- the implications of findings for current debates about social policy.

A random sample of 416 families was selected and one respondent (aged 18 to 60) in each family was interviewed using a structured interview schedule with several open-ended questions. A series of in-depth, case-study interviews was also carried out covering migrants, single parents, poor families, well-off families, and families affected by unemployment. Details of the findings are to be found in the report to respondents titled *Social support in an Australian community*.

The study was later repeated in the Northern Territory (in Darwin and Jabiru) where families are likely to be more isolated from traditional family supports, and in the inner Sydney suburb of Ashfield where there is a higher migrant population and where families are less well off, more mobile and subject to urban pressures. A report of the Ashfield study entitled *Social support networks in an urban community* has been produced by Diana Shaw and Lois Bryson of the School of Sociology, University of New South Wales. This element of the study was carried out in conjunction with the Ashfield

Municipal Council which was planning to survey its own services. The Council agreed to use the Institute's interview schedule as a basis and shared the costs of the study.

Former Institute Research Fellow, Dr Peter d'Abbs has almost completed a book based on all three study locations. This will be published commercially during 1985–86.

Another book-length manuscript has been written by Jean McCaughey based on detailed case studies of families included in the Geelong survey. We have no funds to print this so are again seeking a commercial publisher which will delay dissemination of the findings. The case studies examine what kinds of formal and informal support are available to and used by families in five broad categories: the poor, the unemployed, migrants, the comfortably-off and one-parent families. The rich descriptions of how they cope and how they are helped in their daily tasks or in crisis situations lead to several clear policy conclusions about family support service delivery.

This project addresses both real political issues and practical day-to-day concerns and illustrates clearly the strong connections linking the two. The 'private' domain of the family exists but it impacts on and is affected by a wide range of external issues, circumstances, institutions and conditions. By investigating and reporting on the supports available to and used by families in circumstances where internal family support does not exist, is inadequate or inappropriate to the circumstances, the Institute draws the attention of policy makers to areas of neglect, unsuccessful targeting of benefits or services, and modes of service delivery which might better meet the needs of recipients.

Support Services Project

The Institute in 1984–85 has been barely able to monitor developments in the family support area. Staff members however made significant inputs to the reviews of child care services, the Conference of Welfare Administrators' review of the Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) and to various State conferences on the FSSS issue. It is a cause for some alarm that the working paper, which resulted from the various State reviews, has not to this point been released. Funding for all these services will cease at the end of August unless the report is tabled in Parliament and continued Commonwealth and State support is recommended. Family Support Services funded organisations in the States are alarmed at a possible federal government withdrawal or 'hand-over' to the States, with resulting lower levels of State funding for their work with needy families.

The Institute feels this is an area which needs detailed examination and major restructuring in Australia. Funding for those very services which support families as viable units is totally inadequate, dispersed across all sorts of functional areas of administration and often suffers because such services fall in between Commonwealth and State responsibilities. The Institute is working on a major paper to suggest new policy directions and initiatives in this area, some elements of which are contained in the Director's Reports of the Institute's Newsletters for 1984–85. The Institute's two submissions to the Economic Planning Advisory Council (EPAC) are also seen as major working papers towards this goal, stressing as they do they need for taxation and social security provisions to be seen in mutual interaction as they affect family support and

also stressing the crucial need for community services in support of families as well as an adequate family income base.

Marriage and Family Support

The Institute maintains its interest and liaison with the areas of marriage counselling and marriage education. This year consultations with the Attorney-General's Department and marriage counselling organisations should result in the development of a uniform data collection sheet to provide a national profile of marriage counselling client characteristics.

Presentation of papers and attendance at the major marriage counselling and marriage education annual meetings and conferences assures a continual exchange of ideas and concerns between the Institute and family support organisations.

Family Policies

This area covers all those aspects of government policy and administration that have an impact on marital and family stability. Obviously an enormous task, the Institute has taken a pragmatic and limited view, confining its attentions to the major functional areas of policy – those affecting tax and welfare transfers, housing, community support services such as child care and home help, education and labour force participation.

Much of the Institute's work on policy impacts directly concerns State and local government and its contacts here are extensive and varied. As its database has grown, the Institute has increasingly been invited to contribute to policy formation and analysis at all levels of government.

We continue to stress the uniqueness of this Institute's perspective, that is, its concern for all families at every income level and for every family type, rather than only those in need of welfare. Family needs alter as they move through stages of the life cycle and our focus is on the extent to which changes in policies help or harm families in their own particular context.

The validity of this approach is evident in the use made of the Institute's policy-related information and comment by all political parties and by a wide spectrum of community groups working in the support of family life. The Institute's staff find themselves frequently in the role of offering a unique family perspective on issues too frequently seen only within the narrow confines of poverty, welfare, the status of women, the average family man and the like.

An important aspect of the Institute's work in the family policies area is the interpretation of ABS trend data and its own survey research data in terms of their likely implications for policy and practice. We have never accepted the view that research data are somehow neutral or objective or to be left in raw form for others to interpret. One of the advantages of having a multidisciplinary team working together on family issues is that they build up an insight and expertise not usually found among more narrow, discipline-related specialists, so that it is important that the Institute's research staff expose the value positions from which their interpretations derive. Then those whose views differ can examine the data to test the validity of, and challenge if necessary, the policy interpretations made.

The Institute, as an independent statutory authority, must prove its worth in part at least through its ability to research and publish findings which may not please the government of the day (or its opposition). Government departments are subject to the decisions of their ministers; statutory authorities are not. Though a fine line must often be trod in avoiding direct political comment, the Institute has always held fast to the view that it is the researcher's responsibility to interpret and extrapolate beyond the research findings. The necessary corollary is the openness to public scrutiny of the Institute's research methods, sampling frames, analytic techniques and interpretations. All of the Institute's research data are made available to other researchers and policy analysts for re-examination and re-analysis. In this way the Institute hopes to be able to achieve its stated functions of improving public understanding of factors affecting marital and family stability with a view to supporting the family unit itself in Australian society.

Australian Families Income Transfer (AFIT) Project

The AFIT Project involves the development of computer programs which can utilise large data sets from the Australian Bureau of Statistics such as the Census, the 1981–82 Income and Housing Survey and the 1984 Household Expenditure Survey. Analysis of this information enables the Institute to assess the impact on families of actual or proposed changes to the Australian income-transfer system, that is, the tax system and social security arrangements.

As a result of the development of the AFIT project, occasional *AFIT Bulletins* are published which:

- examine the impact of recent changes in tax-transfer policies; and
- estimate the impact of proposals that have been developed by advocacy groups and/or academic writers.

Two bulletins have been produced so far. The first describes the developmental processes to do with the project and includes an analysis of some options for the 1984–85 Commonwealth Budget. The second assesses the impact of the 1984–85 Budget and traces the longer term changes that have occurred in income transfer programs over the decade 1976–85.

The second *AFIT Bulletin* concludes that the 1984–85 budget had most benefited two-income families, while all married couple families received tax cuts. Changes in the social security arrangements most benefited low-income families with children. Most pensions and benefits, however, did not increase significantly relative to average weekly earnings.

Regarding trends over the last decade, the *AFIT Bulletin No. 2* reported that inequality of disposable incomes is greater in 1984–85 than it was in 1976–77. This has been the result of the deterioration of the relative position of low-income families over the period 1976–77 to 1980–81. Since then, a reversal of trends has occurred although not yet to the extent that such groups are as well off as they were at the beginning of the period.

Submissions to the Economic Planning Advisory Council (EPAC)

In addition to the production of Bulletins, the AFIT Project has been utilised in the development of two submissions to the Economic Planning Advisory Council. The first submission contributed to the development of a medium-term review of the economy by EPAC. The submission described changes in family structures and the policy implications of these. It analysed the changing pattern of distribution of income between families and family types and stressed the vital role access to employment and adequate income support policies had to play in maintaining the well-being of all families and especially in lifting many out of poverty. As structural supports to these objectives, the Institute stressed the need to develop adequate service programs such as child care and an appropriate educational and training system.

The second submission coincided with the Tax Summit and focused on changes to the tax transfer system that would most benefit families. Stressing the need to assist all families with children and especially those on low incomes, the Institute proposed a radically changed system which comprised three components:

- increased rates of Family Allowances, changed to an age-related basis and indexed;
- supplementary payments to families on low incomes; and
- a streamlined income security system based on relative family incomes alone.

There is also a recognition of the need for services to be maintained and expanded in several areas including child care, education and housing. Finally, the submission expresses serious concern regarding the impact of proposals to introduce broadly based consumption taxes. Perhaps the most central of these concerns is the failure to recognise the destructive effect that non-indexation of child-related payments has had on family incomes and the consequent lack of provision for indexation in the proposals then current.

Housing in Australia Project

Evaluation Project — Victorian Housing Loan Scheme for Low Income Families

In November 1984 the Institute of Family Studies successfully tendered for the task of evaluating the Capital Indexed Loans (CAPIL) Pilot Scheme run by the Victorian Ministry of Housing which provides housing loans for low income families. The Pilot is aimed at testing:

- the affordability of home purchase to very low income earners; and
- whether home ownership alleviates or exacerbates poverty.

Traditionally, families earning less than $200 per week have not had home purchase available as a housing option because their incomes are insufficient to either qualify for, or afford repayments on, a mortgage of sufficient amount from the private sector. Although the Victorian Government has attempted to provide this service by providing subsidised loans to low income earners, the constraints of a credit foncier system (that is, the system of commercial mortgages), and limitations on government funding and subsidy have effectively excluded such income groups from government loans.

Other constraints on the availability of home loans for very low income earners have arisen because of the belief that the 'other' costs of ownership (rates, insurance and maintenance in particular) represent a potentially crippling burden to very low income families.

The Pilot scheme has been developed on the following assumptions which implicitly challenge the view that the only housing response for low income families is through the development of the public rental sector. They are:

- that poverty is a temporary experience (although the period of time will vary and there may be a number of instances of poverty during a life cycle);
- there are considerable financial and tenure advantages of home ownership;
- a Capital Indexed Loan can be developed which removes the subsidies attached to other government credit foncier home loan approaches;
- there is still a prevalent demonstrated preference for home ownership.

The basic features of the Ministry's CAPIL scheme are:

- commencing repayments are set at 25 per cent of income;
- each year repayments escalate by the percentage change in the CPI over the past 12 months;
- a real interest rate of 3 per cent per annum is charged;
- the effective finance charge is the compound of the real interest rate and the CPI.

Broadly speaking the differences between a Capital Indexed Loan and one based on a traditional credit foncier are:

- the load of the CAPIL loan is spread throughout the life of the loan by keeping repayments' real value constant while credit foncier repayments decline in real terms over time;
- CAPIL mortgages more readily overcome the effect of changes in inflation on the repayments burden. This is achieved by allowing the nominal or dollar value of repayments to vary, while keeping their real value constant at about 25 per cent of income throughout the term of the loan;
- the variability of repayments means that repayments can be readily related to what is affordable, rather than being defined by a fixed formula as in traditional mortgages. Thus if the borrower loses his or her job, repayments can be reduced to 25 per cent of current income. Similarly, if income increases as a result of, for example, a spouse returning to paid employment, repayments can be adjusted to a new level.

The Institute's Study of the Housing Loans Scheme will therefore have two broad aims:

- to gather information on the difficulties experienced by low income families in purchasing a home through the indexed loans method; and
- to assess the economic and social impacts on families of borrowing from the Ministry relative to those who remain in the private sector.

The first of these aims will help in the assessment of the risks to lenders of home purchase finance to low income borrowers.

Data sought will include the incidence of default among different family types and different income groups, the importance of changes in family composition (re-partnering, family break-up, extra children) and employment in determining the pattern of repayments and defaults.

The second aim focusses more on the benefits and stresses for the families themselves, and whether the option of purchase through an indexed loan has significant advantages over continuing to rent privately or seeking a normal private market loan.

The 550 Ministry borrowers will be compared with a sample of predominantly private rental tenants. Although the Victorian Government envisages a five year evaluation of the scheme, funds have been provided only for the first year.

The Institute sees three major issues of importance in this evaluation for government income, housing and services policies.

- *The pattern of change over time in family incomes.* There are few studies in Australia which have monitored changes in incomes and family composition over a number of years, but American research suggests that the data collected have major implications for social security, taxation and housing policies, revealing substantial change and suggesting the need for targeted help when needs are greatest. The Institute's evaluation will gather information on the longer term repayment capacity of sole parents, unemployed families and those on low pay, and identify the significance of social security payments, full and part-time employment (and the barriers to employment) and the number of earners.
- *Changes in family composition.* Repartnering, family dissolution and changes (leaving home, births) in the number of dependent children have an important impact on family income and the capacity of a family to meet housing repayments. The Institute will seek to ascertain the extent to which economic factors were important in the decisions of borrower and control group families to break-up, delay having children, or to remarry.
- *Housing standards, location and 'hidden' housing costs.* The evaluation will assess the quality of housing of borrower and control group families as well as gather details on the full range of housing and location-related costs — repairs, rates, insurance, travel, and the like.

As well as information of direct relevance to the Ministry of Housing, the study should provide invaluable information on the consequences of inadequacies in such Commonwealth programs as Social Security, training and employment.

Assessment of the Needs of Unsupported Students

In January 1985 the Institute of Family Studies was commissioned by the Commonwealth Department of Education to conduct a study entitled 'The Assessment of the Needs of Unsupported Students'. The Department was concerned that recent social changes, including increased family breakdown and the arrival of large numbers of Indo-Chinese refugees, had generated a problem that had not yet been addressed. Many young people of secondary school age were unable to continue their schooling because of losing the support of their families. Additionally many such unsupported youth would be condemned to marginal labour force status because of leaving school

early yet would return to study if appropriate support arrangements could be made.

The study was to be undertaken at a time when the Commonwealth Government was examining important reports such as the Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD) review of youth policies, the Kirby Report on Labour Market Programs and the Karmel Report on the Quality of Education. Rationalisation of youth income support arrangements was on the Government's agenda and many Departments were concerned that at least unsupported students deserved some assistance to overcome their severe disadvantage. Besides the Department of Education, other users of the study were to be the Departments of Social Security, Community Services, Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and the Office of Youth Affairs.

The study was to:

- review the relevant literature;
- assess numbers and characteristics of unsupported students;
- determine causes of leaving home and school;
- document Commonwealth and State provision of assistance; and
- identify gaps in service provision.

The findings show that:

- little consideration of the needs of such youth is evident, particularly in income support, accommodation and educational programs;
- great difficulties exist in estimating numbers;
- income support arrangements are inadequate, inaccessible and inappropriate;
- access to accommodation is virtually non-existent;
- personal support and assistance is available only on an ad hoc, almost accidental, basis; and
- reluctance by both Commonwealth and State government departments to accept all but the barest of responsibility for such youth has produced a complex, minimalised system of support that ultimately relies on private provision as the basis of adequate support.

The study is under consideration by the Commonwealth Department of Education and it is hoped that publication will be arranged through the Australian Government Publishing Service.

Family Impact Seminars Project

Because 1985 is the International Year of Youth, the Institute decided that it should focus any major seminars on the issues facing families with youth. Much of the Institute's work throws light on the processes of youth education, leaving home, finding employment, alienation and self-esteem, re-training, financial support by families or through youth allowances, decision-making about adult sexual relationships, living together, marriage and having children.

As already indicated above, the Institute has been heavily involved in discussions of youth policy issues at the federal level and it seemed appropriate that the Institute offer to run joint seminars with the various State International Youth Year (IYY) Committees.

Letters were sent to each State committee, outlining a possible series of papers based on Institute work that could be presented, and suggesting that State contributions in the form of papers or youth panels could make up a useful Family Impact Seminar in each State and Territory. Despite several initial expressions of interest, only one State has taken up our offer, and an IYY Family Impact Seminar will be held in Adelaide on August 28. With cutbacks to our budget we cannot afford to pursue further seminars in other States in 1985–86, but it is regrettable that this Institute's initiative was not more actively pursued by the various IYY Committees.

Research Development

One of the stated functions for the Institute is to encourage and coordinate further research in the family studies area. The Support Grants offered are the most obvious way of doing this, but the Institute has developed an extensive research advisory and coordination capacity which now ensures that research across the nation helps built a cumulative picture of the state of Australia's families. Our own research projects, of course, set the pattern for other family studies, acting not only as a model but also as a stimulus for further work. The Institute's main aim has been to ensure complementarity rather than overlap or repetition of family research and we are pleased with the results so far.

Family Organisations Network Project

The Family Information Centre (FIC) since 1980 has been compiling comprehensive records on organisations involved in family research, in provision of services for families or which are otherwise of relevance to family life. The file also contains information about individuals conducting research on families and matters affecting family life. Information from both Australian and overseas sources is included and is used frequently by the Family Information Centre in assisting people with their enquiries and for referral purposes.

The file was begun by the Director in the first months of the Institute's life with a questionnaire sent to well-known organisations and researchers requesting information about their work and activities. Since those initial responses to the questionnaire were received, the Family Information Centre staff has continuously updated existing records and entered new files into this system, known as the *Network File of Organisations and Family Researchers.*

In 1983 a major overhaul of the system was conducted. Every organisation on file was contacted by the FIC for new or updated information on its activities, its research programs and for names of contact staff. Much of this updating work was carried out by three field work students from the Librarianship Department of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. At that time many new records were created for organisations and individuals not previously listed. The file also now contains brochures, pamphlets and reports from many organisations.

Over 40 per cent of the file content is of overseas organisations in the United States, England and Europe with contributions also from Japan, China and other countries. A number of these organisations on the Network File that regularly publish research reports and other materials of relevance to family issues have entered into an agreement with the Institute to exchange their own publications for a full or partial

subscription to the Institute's published works. By these exchange agreements, material not otherwise obtainable through the usual book purchase channels is obtained for the FIC's reference collection.

Eventually it is hoped that records of organisations in the Network File can be included in FAMILY Database for public online access. FAMILY Database has been designed so that entries to non-document material can be included and regularly updated. However, financial resources so far have been insufficient for the FAMILY Database project to take up extra subject scope or new document files. Another important file that it is intended to include is the *Directory of Australian family studies films and videos* published in December 1984, and the *Summaries of Courses* in the Family Studies Education Exchange (FSEE) also published in December 1984. Both these listings, compiled by Mary Mannison when she was working at the Institute as a Visiting Fellow in 1984, are very good candidates for inclusion in the database because provision of national access to course outlines would be beneficial for both students and for lecturers who are running, or intend to develop, such family based courses. Thus at present the Institute's records and information about family organisations and family research is under-utilised by the public because it is accessible only by direct inquiry to the FIC. Online accessibility via FAMILY Database would mean that the information would be publicly available regardless of location.

Family Research Advice

The Institute maintains a consultative role with individuals, government and non-government bodies. Staff have conducted these consultations, either as individuals or as members of planning or advisory teams, with the main aims of informing others of the Institute's research and findings, of advising on family research already in existence elsewhere or of formulating research in areas not well covered by existing data.

The major bodies and individuals consulted with during 1984-85 include:

Adelaide Central Mission financial counselling

ASEAN Interaction planning a workshop in conjunction with ANZAAS

Asian Marriage Survey (East-West Population Institute) planning group

Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, Children's Program Committee child development research

Australian Bureau of Statistics formulation of questions for 1986 Census of Population and Housing; formulation of questions for 1986-87 Income Survey; devising methods for incorporating more detailed family data into all ABS collections; family law statistics

Australian Children's Television Foundation family research

Australian Council for Educational Research family research

Australian Council of Social Services income security and taxation issues

Australian Council of Trade Unions maternity leave study

Australian Democrats (Senator Janine Haines) family policy

Australian Institute of Criminology database development; domestic violence conference

Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs database development; information services

Australian National University Centre for Continuing Education family change

Australian National University family project planning committee

Australian Population Association forums on family data and analysis

Australia Post child care and employers' responsibility

Australian Psychological Society counselling code of ethics

Ballarat Catholic Diocese family welfare services

Ballarat Children's Services Group research study on family services

Ballarat Regional Family and Children's Services Committee advice on research

Baume, Senator Peter family policy

Bendigo Institute & Regional Council of Education family research and policy

Bicentennial History Group material on family history in the 1880s plus material for volume on Bicentennial Statistics

Breen, Dame Marie Advisory Council of Elders

Brotherhood of St Laurence income security and taxation issues

Catholic Education Office youth issues; disadvantaged schools program; planned cost of children study

Child Accident Prevention Foundation child accident statistics

Children's Protection Society, Victoria publications and dissemination

Children's Welfare Association standards evaluation project

Collective of Self Help Groups (COSH), Victoria information services

Commission for the Future structure and operations

Committee on Comparative Analysis of Fertility and Family Planning of the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population

Commonwealth-State Population Workshop convened to discuss available data and methods of analysis

Council for the Single Mother and her Child income security and taxation issues

Curriculum Development Centre advice to Australian Curriculum Information Network (ACIN) database

Deakin University children's educational transition

Dept. of Community Services, Commonwealth access changeover; income security and taxation issues

Dept. of Education, Commonwealth project on financial arrangements between parents and students in TAFE; provision of family data based on IFS analysis of the Households Sample File, Census of Population and Housing, 1981; contract of research project to IFS on the needs of unsupported students; children's study; IYY Seminar

Dept. of Health, Commonwealth Chinese family planning statisticians program

Dept. of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Commonwealth National Curriculum Materials Project on Population; support networks; ethnic marriage breakdown statistics

Dept. of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Office of Youth Affairs income security and taxation issues; IYY Seminar

Dept. of Social Security, Commonwealth rehabilitation services; income security and taxation issues

Dept. of Territories and Local Government, Commonwealth IYY Seminar

Economic Planning Advisory Council tax submissions, AFIT

Australian Family Income Transfer project and database

Family Court of Australia information collection and dissemination; statistical collection; counselling; Economic Consequences of Marriage Breakdown (ECMB) survey

Family Law Council IFS representative; Tricia Harper member; regular consultation

Family Law Section, Law Council of Australia members, consultants, conference papers

Family Life Movement advice

Family Planning Association research advice

Federal Opposition Leader advice on family policies Federal Opposition Thredbo meeting; videotape presentation on family policies

Flinders University, SA poverty

Gorman, Ann Pilot Family Conciliation Centres evaluation

Human Rights Commission advisory; women and poverty

International Council of Social Service intercountry adoption

International Population Dynamics Program advisory

Mallee Region Probation Officers and Family Care family support services

Maroondah Region Principal's Association children's research

Marriage Education Institute marriage 'summit'

Matrimonial Property Inquiry advisory

Menzies Foundation family change

Messner, Senator Tony social welfare policy

Ministry of Housing, Victoria evaluation of pilot program of capital indexed loans for low income families

Monash University Family Law Advisory Committee; consultation

National Council of Jewish Women youth issues

National Institute of Economic and Social Research consultation re. AFIT, poverty line

National Library of Australia database collaboration

New South Wales Catholic Education Office family life education

New South Wales Dept. of Aboriginal Affairs study of Aboriginal family structure

New South Wales Minister for Youth and Community Services review of adoption legislation and practice

New South Wales Parliament IYY Seminar

Northern Territory Dept. of Health IYY Seminar

Office of Child Care Family Support Services Scheme; child care

Parents Without Partners divorce trends

Phillip Institute of Technology curriculum advice

Pregnancy Support Services, Caroline Chisholm Society advisory

Puplick, Senator Chris family policy

Queensland Dept. for Welfare Services and Ethnic Affairs IYY Seminar

Queensland Division of Pre-school Education research issues

Queensland Education Dept. curriculum (family studies)

Queensland Family Advisory Committee impact of technology on families

Queensland National Council of Women welfare legislation Queensland Parliamentary Labor Party; family policy

Queensland Year of the Family factors affecting family well-being, advice to committee and to community and local government groups in Townsville, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Brisbane

Queen Victoria Hospital, Melbourne consultation on IVF program

Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists family structures

Schools Commission family research and policy advice

Senate Social Welfare Committee report on institutionalisation of children

Social Science Data Archives consultation

Social Welfare Research Centre, New South Wales consultation on family data; research topics; publication and information activities

South Australian College of Advanced Education publication production and costs

South Australian Dept. of Child Adolescent and Family Health Services research advice

South Australian Dept. of Labour IYY Seminar

South Australian Dept. of Technology family and education impact

South Australian Dept. of Community Welfare rape crisis centre; youth statistics South Australian Ethnic Affairs Council; refugee youth project

South Australian Government inquiry into poverty

South Australian Ministry of Education & Technology curriculum; technology and the family

South Australian Women's Policy Unit domestic violence

Staples, Peter MHR poverty 'summit'

Swan Hill Health and Welfare Group, Victoria family services

TASCOSS Tasmanian Family Council establishment

Tasmanian Dept. of Community Welfare youth policy

Tasmanian Dept. of Education IYY Seminar

University of Melbourne medicine course; family policy

University of New England housing; poverty issues

Victorian Adoption, Guardianship and Custody Legislative Panel membership

Victorian Council on Ageing aged poverty

Victorian Council for Christian Education income security and taxation issues

Victorian Dept. of Community Welfare, Geelong/Shepparton study of adolescents in care/rural families

Victorian Dept. of Community Welfare intercountry adoption; needs based planning for family counselling services; evaluation of family aides

Victorian Dept. of Health marriage guidance counselling

Victorian Dept. of Youth, Sport and Recreation IYY Seminar

Victorian Education Dept. family change, database services

Victorian Parliament IYY Seminar, International Conference

Victorian Premier's Department family policy issues

Victorian Social Security Consultation Committee lone parent working party

Victorian State Relief Committee statistical collection

VCOSS adoption legislation; tax summit; AFIT; poverty task force

West Australian Dept. of Youth, Sport and Recreation IYY Seminar

Women's Bureau, Dept. of Employment and Industrial Relations maternity leave survey

Youth Affairs Council of Australia youth issues

Youth Ministers' Council Working Party on Identification of Youth Needs and National Research Agenda

Support Grants Scheme

In 1984–85 the Institute continued to encourage the work of other researchers in the broad family studies area through its Support Grants scheme. Under this scheme, encouragement or seeding grants are offered on a competitive basis to support pilot studies, policy analyses, secondary data analyses, project completion, and the like. Conditions under which grants are offered require the submission of a report, the better of which are published by the Institute. Summary reports of all supported projects are included in the *IFS Newsletter* and copies of the reports themselves are held by the Family Information Centre for consultation.

In response to advertisements placed in October 1984, 47 applications were received. These were considered by the Institute's internal evaluation committee, and from a short list of six, the Board of Management recommended three to the Attorney-General for approval. The three approved proposals are as follows:

Applicant	*Purpose*	*Amount* $
Dr Frances Baum, Southern Community Health Services Research Unit, Morphett Vale Community Health Centre, Morphett Vale, SA	To study the impact that having a child has on the marital relationship of first time parents and their use of formal and informal social supports and networks	6 050
Marriage Guidance Council of WA Inc., (Mr James Crawley, Director) Perth, WA	To carry out a pilot study of the impact of retirement on the marital relationship	9 098
Dr Kay Bussey and Prof. Jacqueline Goodnow, School of Behavioural Sciences, Macquarie University, Sydney, NSW	To provide data collection assistance for a project entitled 'Children's preparation for the judicial system'	5 000

Conferences and Seminars

During the year the Institute undertook the organisation of a major international conference on the theme 'Social Change and Family Policy'. In 1981, the Director had been asked by the International Sociological Association's Committee on Family Research (ISA-CFR) to consider hosting the Committee's XXth International Seminar to be held in 2 to 3 years time. As the invitation conveyed a gratifying recognition of the Institute's standing internationally, Dr Edgar accepted and planning commenced in 1982.

The costs of the conference were part met by a special appropriation from the Government; the remainder was absorbed by the Institute's general budget at the expense of other activities. The conference was held at the Victorian Arts Centre from 20 to 24 August 1984. In all, around 250 people attended and reaction was overwhelmingly positive. The theme was chosen to ensure relevance to government policy considerations. Within that overall theme, nine individual sessions were programmed on the following topics:

- Is the family worth supporting? Pressures, conflicts and expectations of family life.
- Major demographic trends affecting family policy.
- Families with children and social policy approaches to family support and education.
- The administration of family policy – world-wide trends. (This session was organised on behalf of the International Union of Family Organisations which was included as a co-sponsor of the seminar.)
- Youth policies and the family/work/education relationship.
- Work, economic policies and welfare consequences and responsibilities.
- Intergenerational exchange, ageing trends and the public/private support dimensions.
- Legal regulation of the family and the effect of changes in family law.

A detailed report on the conference is contained in *IFS Newsletter No. 11* (December 1984). The conference proceedings have been published in five volumes which include Key Papers, Discussant Papers and Free Papers. These are available from the Institute.

Visiting Fellows

The following were Visiting Fellows at the Institute during 1984–85.

Dr Ailsa Burns, Senior Lecturer in Psychology in the School of Behavioural Sciences, Macquarie University, NSW spent two months at IFS from mid–August to mid–October 1984. Dr Burns has research interests in the areas of family, divorce and life span development. During her visit Dr Burns revised and updated *Children and families in Australia*, a book co-authored with Professor Jacqueline Goodnow and used extensively in child development courses. She also worked on a chapter for a new book on human geography.

Dr Ed Herold, Associate Professor in the Department of Family Studies at the University of Guelph, Canada, spent four months at the Institute from August 1984 working in the area of human relations education.

Professor Orjan Hultaker, Professor of Sociology at Uppsala University, Sweden, and Secretary of the International Sociological Association's Committee on Family Research returned to the Institute following the Social Change and Family Policy conference and completed work on two Occasional Papers entitled *Earnings-related benefits and pensions* and *Superannuation in Sweden* published by the Institute in May 1985.

Ms Susan Kelly, lecturer in the Psychology Department, Swinburne Institute of Technology, Melbourne, spent part of her study leave at the Institute in the first half of 1985. While Visiting Fellow, Ms Kelly, who is completing her PhD on the impact on marriage and the family of mature age women returning to study, analysed data from the Institute's Australian Family Formation Project relating to urban and rural differences in family values and family formation patterns.

Ms Mary Mannison, lecturer in the Department of Psychology, Brisbane College of Advanced Education, visited the Institute from July to November 1984. While at the Institute Ms Mannison examined the literature on family studies curricula in tertiary colleges and prepared a report on the nature and occurrence of those curricula, together with an annotated list of Australian resource materials. This valuable resource is now deposited with the Family Information Centre and is both added to and consulted by those conducting or wishing to conduct family studies courses.

Submissions to Government Bodies

The Institute was asked to make a submission to the Drugs Summit held by the Commonwealth Department of Health in February 1985. Drawing on data from both the Australian Children in Families Survey and the Australian Values Study, the paper stressed the importance of understanding family relationships rather than either a medical or criminal approach to the issue.

Detailed earlier in this report are the Institute's submissions to EPAC on economic planning, titled *Families and Australia's economic future* and for the Tax Summit, titled *Changing the Australian taxation system : towards a family income guarantee*. These occupied extensive staff and computer resources and were well received.

Information Collection and Dissemination

The Family Information Centre (FIC) has now firmly established itself as the national resource centre for information on families and family life in Australia. In 1984–85, its collection of materials grew by 725 separate monograph titles with 234 of these coming through donations or exchange programs with organisations in Australia or overseas. Further additions to this valuable information resource were over 317 journal titles of which 118 were gratis or from exchange partners, 166 separate titles of statistical and demographic analysis from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and 48 annual reports from Australian and overseas government agencies or family related organisations. This represents a slight reduction in acquisition due to reduced budget and the loss of one part-time staff member during the year. In March 1985, a list of periodicals held in the Family Information Centre was published to assist scholars using the collection and for libraries who use its resources in the national inter-library loan program.

The Family Information Centre has continued to build up its holdings of Australian titles and materials as part of its overall collection policy. All the Australian materials acquired are indexed for national access in FAMILY *Database*.

Information and Reference Services

There is no doubt that Australians from all walks of life are vitally interested in finding out about families and family life in Australia. The FIC is able to respond to such requests for information from researchers, government officers, politicians, policy makers and journalists as well as the 'lay' public by using the

TABLE 4.1 FIC acquisitions of monographs, journals and series, June 1982–July 1985

	1982–83		1983–84		1984–85	
	Bought	Gift	Bought	Gift	Bought	Gift
Monographs	965	n.a.	720	259	491	234
Periodicals	231	n.a.	185	118	199	118
ABS Series	n.a.	177	—	177	—	166

Institute's own research publications, by use of the materials in the library collection and by referring to the indexed items now available through FAMILY *Database*.

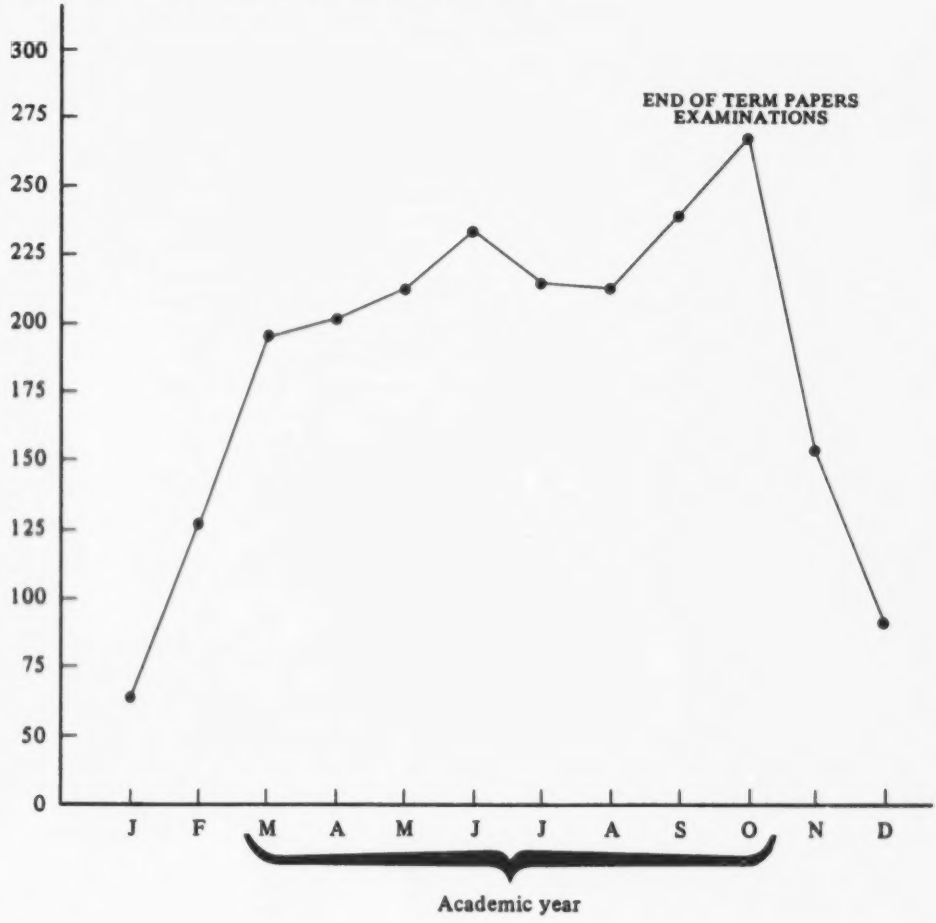
The FIC collects regular statistics on the use of its resources and these show that there is a wide variety of user groups. Students from both secondary schools and universities and colleges are among the people who use the FIC's service most, followed by social support services and helping professionals, academics and teachers, government offices and agencies and librarians. Of particular note is that the media consistently rely on the Family Information Centre and the Institute as a source of information about family matters. The media as a user group represents about 6 per cent of requesters, but this does not take into account the large number of requests the media make of the Director and senior research staff for television and radio interviews and talk back shows and detailed discussions with journalists researching background material for a host of programs focusing on families and related issues.

Table 4.2 User groups, January–December 1984, percentage use

Group description	*Jan–March*	*April–June*	*July–Sept*	*Oct–Dec*	*Annual % of all user groups*
	%	%	%	%	%
Students	25	48	46	22	35
Helping professionals	14	13	12	26	16
Academics and teachers	16	11	9	12	12
Government offices	11	7	7	15	10
Media personnel	5	5	6	8	6
Librarians	6	4	5	9	6
All others	23	12	15	8	15

Not surprisingly with students, teachers and academics forming such a large body of FIC users, the pattern of monthly requests for information closely reflects the academic calendar with the peak demand period in September and October just prior to end of year assignments and examinations.

Figure 4.1 Requests made to FIC, 1984, monthly.



Family law and families with special problems continue to be the areas of most concern to enquirers. There is strong interest shown in trends and change in marriage and family, the Institute's own research and its activities, family relationships and dynamics, and services to families.

Table 4.3 Inquiry subjects, January-December 1984, percentage

	Jan-March		*April-June*		*July-Sept*		*Oct-Dec*		*Annual total*		*% of all enquiries*
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	
General inquiries about IFS	84	(29)	105	(37)	48	(17)	50	(17)	287	(100)	13
Trends and change in marriage and family	42	(15)	77	(27)	79	(28)	87	(31)	285	(100)	13
Family law	62	(17)	127	(35)	110	(30)	62	(17)	367	(100)	17
Family relationships and dynamics	52	(19)	99	(36)	78	(28)	101	(37)	275	(100)	13
Services to families	43	(14)	88	(29)	80	(26)	94	(31)	305	(100)	14
Reproduction and sexuality	25	(22)	39	(34)	40	(34)	12	(10)	116	(100)	5
Families with special problems	69	(16)	138	(32)	179	(41)	50	(11)	436	(100)	20
Other matters	11	(10)	27	(24)	30	(27)	44	(38)	112	(100)	5
TOTAL INQUIRIES	387	(18)	645	(30)	644	(30)	500	(23)	2176	(100)	100

The number of inter-library loans requested by the FIC for use by Institute staff remained high for 1984–85 with 1129 items requested. This was a decline of a little over 20 per cent on last year's loan requests. Of these requests, 72 per cent resulted in the subsequent loan of the item or the provision of a photocopy to the FIC.

In 1984–85 there was a forty-five per cent increase in requests from other libraries for loan of materials from the FIC's collection over 1983–84. The significant increase is most likely due to the increased awareness among librarians of the FIC's resources brought about by the introduction of FAMILY *Database* online on AUSINET. Some of this increase can be attributed also to the increased coverage of family matters in the media and heightened public awareness of factors affecting family life.

FAMILY Database

1984–85 has been the first year of operation of the Institute's online bibliographic database – FAMILY *Database*. FAMILY *Database* is a computer-based bibliographic system containing references to family related issues and family life from 1980 onwards. It includes material published in Australia and material written by Australians or about Australian family issues in overseas publications. The financial year saw the culmination of FIC's development of its FAMILY *Database* when it was released on 1 September 1984 with 1000 documents nationally online via the Australia-wide network AUSINET. FAMILY *Database* remained only in online format until February 1985, when the first of the planned annual volumes was published with over 1440 documents together with subject and name indexes. Building the database to sufficient size for public release was made possible by the employment of two indexers for 37 weeks under the Commonwealth Community Employment Program.

FAMILY Database Online

ACI Computer Services is responsible for AUSINET which consists of more than 40 Australian databases covering a diverse range of subject areas, including educational research, business and industry information, and the major National Library databases APAIS (Australian Public Affairs and Information Service) and ANB (Australian National Bibliography).

The Institute has signed a contract to supply FAMILY *Database* to ACI for three years. The agreement requires regular update tapes of indexed documents. At present staff levels (6 working days per week) approximately 150 new records are sent each month to be added to the main file.

The Institute receives royalties for the amount of online usage of the database which help to defray the costs of updating and storage on AUSINET. Online usage of FAMILY *Database* has grown steadily during the year, and its rank position compared with other databases on AUSINET has improved markedly. In October 1984 with 8.29 hours of connect time FAMILY ranked 18th of the 40 data bases; since then use of FAMILY online has risen steadily and at June 1985 ranked 7th with 16.44 connect hours.

An analysis of users provided by ACI Computer Services shows that users are the Institute itself (15%), ACI Computer Services for marketing, demonstration and teaching purposes (35%), State and Commonwealth Government Departments (30.1%), academic institutions (12.7%) and commercial services (7.2%).

FAMILY Database in Print

In January 1985 the first print version of FAMILY *Database* was produced from the computer file. Volume 1, 1984 contained all documents added to the system during 1984. A total of 1449 references to many different types of printed information, including journal articles, books, conference papers, government reports, were listed with abstracts and provided with author and subject indexes.

In April 1985, Mrs Helen Mayer, Federal Member for Chisholm, representing Mr Willis, the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, officially launched the print version of FAMILY *Database* at a function at the Institute. In her address Mrs Mayer spoke of the value of an index such as FAMILY *Database* and commended the informative abstracts it contains.

During 1985 quarterly printed updates are being produced and will be cumulated in an annual volume in December. Subscriptions to this service are $75.00, or $45.00 for the annual volume only.

To date, orders for the print version of FAMILY *Database* have been received from university and college departments, Federal and State health and welfare departments, local government, church groups, media, counselling and welfare agencies, medical practitioners, commercial firms, and secondary school libraries. Library subscriptions have been directed to the library supplier, James Bennett, which handles other Institute publications.

As we had hoped, the print version of FAMILY *Database* seems to reach a different market compared with the online service. Organisations and individuals who do not have online access to AUSINET have so far been buyers. From experience in the Family Information Centre with tertiary and senior secondary students, the information contained in FAMILY is most useful to students in sociology, social work, medicine, law, and legal studies. Thus libraries in tertiary institutions and secondary schools form a further potential market for the print version, even though some would also have the online facility.

Evaluation Survey

To further investigate our potential markets an Evaluation Survey is being conducted. A questionnaire has been designed and sent to libraries, researchers in universities and colleges of advanced education, and other research organisations listed on the Institute's mailing list. Analysis of the questionnaire will provide profiles of FAMILY *Database* users, and point to who is using it, who is interested but hasn't yet used it, and thus provide direction for future publicity and marketing strategies.

From responses received to date, 30 per cent had used the database, and of those who hadn't 78.4 per cent were interested. Thus even at this early stage (25 per cent of responses returned) there are a large number of prospective FAMILY *Database* users yet to be reached.

In-House Computer System

In the 'behind the scenes' production department of FAMILY *Database*, this year has produced great changes, thanks to the Institute's computer staff. In place of a word processsing method there is now a special database system for entering batch data for updates. This incorporates validation and spelling check routines which eliminate errors and thus save editing time.

Another module of the system has been for inputting and updating FAMILY *Thesaurus* which was originally compiled manually and published for use with the database in October 1984. In order to fit the literature we are indexing, the thesaurus needs to be constantly updated and reviewed, and the new computerised system facilitates this.

Another benefit of the new in-house system, is that it enables the inexpensive production of *Selected reading lists* on different subjects. Reading lists selected and compiled by FIC reference staff have continued to be very popular with users. With the Institute's present financial crisis, further publishing of *Selected reading lists* is not possible. By using the FAMILY Database system, recent Australian material can be selected by subject, output to a printer and photocopied, and thus continue the *Selected Reading List* series, albeit in a modified format.

Despite a promising first year in terms of online usage and sales of the print version of FAMILY *Database*, it is unlikely that the print version will continue in its present quarterly format during 1986, owing to the severe cuts in the Institute's publishing budget.

Publications program

During the year the Institute published 26 new titles which reported on its research findings, policy issues and other informational activities. In addition three issues of the *IFS Newsletter* were distributed in August and December 1984 (Numbers 10 and 11) and April 1985 (Number 12).

The IFS Newsletter

Each Newsletter carries reports of the progress of Institute research and other projects funded or conducted by the Institute. As a service to those interested in family studies, each issue contains notices of important conferences, seminars or workshops around Australia sponsored by a host of organisations. In addition the *IFS Newsletters* always contain considered reviews of currently published books and other works in the area of family studies. Readers advise that the book reviews, the reports on research projects and the diary of conferences are extremely useful and important to them in their work.

The August 1984 edition contained longer articles on 'Adolescence and the family' by Gay Ochiltree and on 'Family law centres' by Don Edgar, as well as an account of the statistics on remarriage, and reports on conferences of relevance to family issues. The December 1984 edition contained a supplement of 18 pages on the events and papers presented at the XXth International Seminar on 'Social Change and Family Policies' which the Institute hosted in Melbourne in August 1984. In this issue Tricia Harper wrote on the issues in the reproductive technology debate, Paul Amato reviewed a

submission by the Office of Youth Affairs to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare on children and young people in institutional care. The April 1985 issue celebrated the first five years of the Institute's life and reported at length on its progress with discussion of the current state of research findings. Tricia Harper again provided a timely article on the controversial issue of surrogate motherhood posing the question 'Should we follow this US example?' Don Edgar gave a summary of research from Europe on the concept of equality between men and women. **Newsletter distribution:** The *IFS Newsletter*, now the only free publication and most important information vehicle, conveys reports on all kinds of family issues to over 7000 Australians and people overseas who have registered themselves as interested to hear about the work of the Institute. Every month, a new list of interested persons is registered on the mailing list as well as old addresses being deleted and changes made to existing ones. In 1984–85 a total of 1901 new addresses was listed, 699 were changed and 409 were deleted, resulting in an increase of 1492 new registered subscribers. The Institute is able to reach particular audiences and to direct information to specific groups of people such as policy makers, teachers, social service providers, journalists or government officers in specific departments because the mailing list is coded for subject interests and professional affiliation. The work involved in disseminating materials is maximised through mail outs to those people who most need publications in specific subject areas. **Indexing of Institute publications in other databases:** The major *IFS Newsletter* articles and many Institute publications are now indexed in a number of Australian and overseas abstract services and databases. This exposure of Institute work increases the reach and influence of our research on family matters. International database services now recording Institute documents in their printed and online services are *Educational Resources Information Centre* (ERIC), *Communication Abstracts, Sage Family Studies Abstracts, Sage Human Resources Abstracts, Population Index* and *Family Resources Databank* in the United States, Institut National d'Education Populaire database and BIRD database of the International Centre for Childhood (Centre International de l'Enfance) in France.

FAMILY Publications

FAMILY *Database* publications are an important part of the Institute's public information service and its first printed products were all published in this financial year. The first publication was the FAMILY *Database Thesaurus*, a specially created index of family studies subject terms, in September 1984 and this first edition is now sold out. The first cumulative volume of FAMILY documents was released in December and subscriptions were fulfilled in January. The April FAMILY *Database* Update distributed to subscribers was also used extensively in a marketing exercise as an introductory sample to new or potential users.

IFS Monographs

Two IFS Monographs were published and distributed in this financial year, Number 4 titled *A roof over their heads: housing issues and families in Australia* (June 1984) and Number 5 titled *'We can manage': expectations about care and varieties of family support among people 75 years and over* (February 1985). Both these monographs were published as a result of research commissioned and supported by the Institute. They have both been reviewed favourably in professional and academic journals and have sold well.

Major IFS Series

In the major series published during this financial year were a **Discussion Paper** in October 1984 (No. 12: *Changing families, changing schools: parent involvement in schools*), two **Working Papers** in July 1984 and May 1985 (No. 8: *Cost of children in Australia* and No. 9: *Family formation and ethnicity*), two **Selected Reading Lists** in October 1984 and May 1985 (No. 15: *Children and family problems: books for young children* and No. 16: *Divorce: Australian legislation*) and one **Policy Background Paper** in June 1984 (No. 5: *Should families be a focus for policies?*)

The second issue of the **AFIT Bulletin** in February 1985 titled *Income redistribution through tax and social security: a review of recent trends*, tied in closely with the Institute's two **Submissions to the Economic Planning Advisory Council** the first published in March (*Families and Australia's economic future*) and the second in May (*Changing the Australian taxation system: towards a family income guarantee*). The Institute published in July 1984, Dr Meredith Edward's thesis titled *The income unit in the Australian tax and social security systems* as a service to foster debate in this critical policy area. And in May 1985 to further this debate about economics and the family, two papers by visiting research scholar Orjan Hultaker, were published, the first titled *Earnings-related benefits and pensions: an analysis illustrated by examples from Sweden* and the second *Superannuation in Sweden*.

Co-operative Publication

The Institute's publications program is used to assist in publicising issues in debate in the social policy and social service arena. Each year the Institute has cooperated with the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at Melbourne University and the Social Welfare Research Centre at University of New South Wales to document in diary format the past year's **Social Legislation and Policy**. This is now a well accepted reference text by policy makers, journalists, service providers and researchers.

As previously mentioned, the Institute published in co-operation with Prentice-Hall of Australia the book titled *Ethnic family values in Australia*.

Family Impact Seminars

In December 1984 we published the edited proceedings of nationally held **Seminars on community-based services for children and families** sponsored in every State by the Institute. The volume of proceedings was sent out to those who attended and other interested persons. Response to the issues has resulted in good sales of the volume in all States.

Reports to ACIF Respondents

Each year the Institute publishes works detailing findings from its own research projects. Of great importance this year was the publication of the first report to respondents of the Australian Children in Families Survey. Two publications were prepared, one for general distribution to parents, teachers and the older children and the other specifically for the younger children in the survey. The larger general report, *Child's eye view of family life* was launched in Canberra by the Attorney-General, Mr Lionel Bowen, in May.

Distribution and Sale of IFS Publications

In August 1984 the Institute began charging for all publications except the *IFS Newsletter* and the FIC's *Selected reading lists*. The range and size of publications has increased markedly, the average number of pages per document now being 167. It was considered that increasing costs of publishing Institute titles, now no longer small items, necessitated a change to policy. Concern that the decision to charge for publications would affect demand was not borne out; demand for publications increased over the 12 month period from a low of 378 titles in September 1984 to a high of 1765 titles ordered in May 1985.

Statistics on orders have been kept on a monthly basis; 5137 items were requested in the first 5 months to December 1985 and a further 6368 items to June 1985 making a total of 11 505 items distributed for the year as a direct result of received orders. Of this number, approximately 30 per cent has been issued as gratis copies, the rest have been paid for at full retail price or at either of our two discounts for trade or bulk purchases. Of the publications sold between January and June 1985, 44 per cent were sold through book stores and library suppliers and the value of these items was $19 065.70. Earnings on the sales of all publications items was $39 155 to the end of June 1985.

Table 4.4 Orders for IFS publications fulfilled, August 1984–June 1985

Month	*Copies* *N*	*% Gratis* *%*	*Value* *$*	*Earnings* *$*
1984				
July–August	690	62	n.a.	5 394.50
September	378	14	n.a.	2 276.50
October	603	38	n.a.	3 028.50
November	1 092	11	n.a.	2 331.60
December	2 374	31	5 465.30	1 551.25
1985				
January	1 027	37	1 969.80	3 533.67
February	1 155	29	2 207.50	2 423.32
March	1 009	36	3 791.40	1 933.24
April	490	34	926.50	2 177.64
May	1 765	27	6 139.00	8 779.79
June	922	24	4 031.50	5 725.11
	11 505	31	n.a.	39 155.12

Note: Values for items distributed were not recorded until December 1984, thus a full annual value is not available.

Just prior to the change over to charging the Institute set up a new distribution system with a staff member whose major task is to manage distribution of all publications through mail orders and direct subscriptions. Thus we have achieved a turn around time of less than 10 days on average for the fulfilling of all orders which averaged 1047 requested items per month.

The major external distribution outlet has been the Australian library supplier, James Bennett Pty Ltd. Other sales outlets, both in Australia and overseas, were book shops and retailers, library suppliers and subscription agencies. The Institute is now included as a publisher in the national reference work for book sellers *Australian Books in Print* with all titles in stock listed. In the next financial year distribution through commercial

book outlets will be further encouraged. The following list shows the range of outlets distributing Institute publications.

Table 4.5 Commercial distribution outlets for IFS publications, 1984–85

Library suppliers and subscription agencies N = 17	*Book retailers* N = 22
AUSTRALIA	**AUSTRALIA**
NSW	NSW
James Bennett Pty. Ltd.	Campus Bookshops
Bennett-Ebsco Subscription Services	Chevalier Bookshop
Book Supplies Pty. Ltd.	Newcastle CAE Bookshop
Butterworths Pty. Ltd. (and Vic.)	Riverina Murray Institute for Higher Education Bookshop
Globe Subscription Agency	University Co-operative Bookshop Ltd.
Hill & Sons	
Law Book Company (and Vic.)	ACT
Mannings Library Services	Australian Government Publishing Service Bookshop(s)
VIC.	VIC.
D.A. Book Depot	Australian Institute of Management (AIM) Bookshop
Mason's Book Centre	Campion Books
Standish Prideaux & Pye	CITSU Bookshop Pty. Ltd.
	McGill Newsagency
OVERSEAS	Melbourne University Bookshop
	Mountain Books Pty. Ltd.
USA	PIT Bookshop
Ambassador Book Service Inc.	Preston College of TAFE Bookshop
E.B.S. Inc. Book Service	Technical Book and Magazine Company
U.K.	SA
B.H. Blackwell, Oxford	C.I.G. — Medishield
	Lutheran Publishing House
EUROPE	
Kniphoust's Boekhandel, Wageningen, Netherlands	QLD.
Swets Subscription Service, Lisse, Netherlands	The Open Book, Milton
Erik Quist Bokhandel, Oslo, Norway	WA
	The University Bookshop, Nedlands
	OVERSEAS
	N.Z.
	Ilam Booksellers, Christchurch
	South Pacific Books Ltd., Auckland
	USA
	Michigan State University Bookshop
	EUROPE
	L. Wouters, Leuven, Belgium

Media Coverage of Institute Activities

Media coverage of Institute research and other activities averaged over six (6.3) news articles, radio or television interviews a week during 1984-85. The majority of this publicity was generated by the 32 Media Releases which publicised research findings, book launches or policy recommendations during the year. In addition, the Institute's mailing list has registered over 300 journalists with an interest in the findings of the research, many of whom contact the Director and staff regularly for comment on related issues.

The most newsworthy issues were, in ranked order, children's views of their family life (from the Australian Children in Families Project), poverty, the divorce rate and the effects of divorce on children and parents, the cost of children, tax and family income support, marriage, counselling and cohabitation.

Print Media

Newsclippings about the Institute's work come to the Family Information Centre via a commercial subscription service which monitors all major metropolitan newspapers. 167 reports featuring the Institute were received this year. Of the metropolitan press reports, there was increased coverage in all States and via national newspapers. The coverage in State order was Victoria (with 21 per cent of the reports), New South Wales (19 per cent), National newspapers (17 per cent), South Australia (16 per cent), Tasmania (12 per cent), Queensland and the ACT (5 per cent each), Western Australia (3 per cent) and the Northern Territory (2 per cent). There is no accurate count of reporting by magazines and country news outlets.

Radio and Television Coverage

The Director and staff took part in 160 radio or television interviews, many on national programs and a number on country stations. Over half the radio and television appearances were made by the Director.

Freedom of Information

Under the *Freedom of Information (FOI) Act* and the *FOI Amendment Act* 1983, the Institute can make available to the public documents about its operations, as long as the material is not exempt under parts of the Act which protect, for example, personal privacy.

Under the Act, Commonwealth agencies, including the Institute, publish detailed information about the way they are organised, their functions and decision-making powers, arrangements for outside participation, and detailed lists of the type of files held. This information is updated annually in the *Commonwealth Government Directory*.

The number of inquiries directly related to IFS as a government instrumentality has risen to 13 per cent of the information requests fielded by the Family Information Centre. In general these requests can be handled without recourse to the FOI Act. However, because of its position as a first port of call for many people with sensitive inquiries about the holdings of government departments the Institute is able to refer people to the appropriate agencies to handle their requests under FOI, either Commonwealth or Victorian government legislation.

Staff Talks and Publications

Publications by individual staff members play a major part in disseminating the Institute's message to a variety of audiences. Also important in this regard are the frequent requests made of the Director and staff to speak on their research and the work of the Institute. The following lists major talks and publications for 1984–85.

Paul Amato

Talks

'Family conflict and child competence'. Department of Psychology, La Trobe University, July 5, 1984

'Child competence in intact, one-parent, and step-families'. Department of Behavioural Sciences, James Cook University of North Queensland, July 23, 1984

'Children in families'. Public forums, Townsville, July 24, Toowoomba, July 25 and Brisbane, July 26, 27, 1984

'Family type, family conflict, and child competence'. Annual Conference of the Australian Psychological Society, Perth, August, 1984

'Children in single parent families'. Joint Sections Meeting, The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, October 26, 1984

'Australian adolescents' views on parents and family life'. Annual meeting of the Association of Australian Jewish Women, March, 1985

'Helping behaviour and environmental psychology'. Department of Psychology, Swinburne Institute of Technology, April 1, 1985

'Attribution theory and helping behaviour'. Department of Psychology, Swinburne Institute of Technology, April 22, 1985

'Interparental conflict, the quality of parent-hild relationships, and child self-esteem'. Annual General Meeting of Australian Social Psychologists, May 11, 1985

Publications

'The effects of family conflict on the competence of children', in *The Educational Magazine*, Victorian Education Department, Vol. 41, No. 4, 1984 (with Gay Ochiltree)

'The child's use of family resources', in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1984 (with Gay Ochiltree)

'Responsibility attribution and helping behaviour in the Ash Wednesday Bushfires', in *Australian Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 191–203, 1984

'An exploratory study of people's reasons for delaying or avoiding helpseeking', in *Australian Psychologist*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 21–31, 1985

The Child's Eye View of Family Life, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, April 1985 (with Gay Ochiltree)

Helen Brownlee

Talks

'Poverty traps', VCOSS Seminar on Tax Reform, March 13, 1985

'Poverty traps and single mothers'. National Conference of the Council for the Single Mother and her Child, April 13, 1985

'Poverty traps and unemployment'. Electorate of Jaga Jaga Seminar on Employment, June 30, 1985

Publications

'Poverty traps', in *Australian Tax Forum*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Winter, 1985

Gordon Carmichael

Talks

'First marriage trends in Australia'. Department of Demography, Australian National University, August 14, 1984

'Determinants of age at first marriage in Australia'. Department of Demography, Australian National University, September 18, 1984

'The current state of marriage: demographic perspectives'. Australian Association of Marriage and Family Counsellors' Workshop on the Current State of Marriage, Melbourne, November 1984

'The Institute of Family Studies and its research programme'. Family Research for Family Policy Workshop, 16th Summer Seminar in Population, East-West Population Institute, Honolulu, June 4, 1985

'Work and the family in Australia: preliminary thoughts on issues and research methodology'. Family Research for Family Policy Workshop, 16th Summer Seminar in Population, East-West Population Institute, Honolulu, June 17, 1985

Publications

'Children and divorce in New Zealand', *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, Vol. 47, 1985, pp. 221-231

'Demographic dimensions of family change in Australia', *The Australian Quarterly*, Vol. 57, 1985,

'Living together in New Zealand: data on co-residence at marriage and on de facto unions', *New Zealand Population Review*, Vol. 10(3), 1984, pp. 41-54

'Non-marital pregnancies in New Zealand since the Second World War', *Journal of Biosocial Science*, Vol. 17, 1985, pp. 167-183

'Remarriage among divorced persons in New Zealand', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 20, 1985, pp. 87-104

Mari Davis

Talks

'FAMILY *Database*: compilation and development'. 1st National meeting of the Australian Curriculum Information Network (ACIN) Co-ordinators, April 11, 1985

'Presentation of research information through series publications: development of a publishing program', CAPP – Communications and Publications People group, May 22, 1985

Don Edgar

Talks

'Family research and social policy'. Ballarat Family and Community Services Regional Committee, July 18, 1984

'Family change'. Townsville Public Meeting, July 23, 1984

'Youth in transition'. Family Planning Association, September 24, 1985

'The role of the father'. Child Adolescent and Family Health Services Conference, Adelaide, October 11, 1984

'Families in crisis – causes and cures'. Women's Action Alliance Public Forum, October 22, 1984

'The development of family structures in Australia'. Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, October 26, 1984

"New Traditionalism' requires new forms of family support'. Queensland ALP Public Forum, November 10, 1984

'Today's child, tomorrow's parents'. 10th Anniversary Conference of the Tasmanian Nursery & Child Care Association, November 24, 1984

'Father does not know best: children and family communication'. University of Western Australia, 57th Annual Summer School, January 17, 1985

'Social change and the family'. 2nd National Summer School in Adult Education, ANU, February 4, 1985

'Emerging changes in family life and their effects on the 'health' of society'. Menzies Foundation Conference, 'Towards a Healthy Lifestyle', February 20, 1985

'Population trends in Australia'. Australian Administrative Staff College, February 28, 1985

'Implications for schools of changing family patterns'. Bendigo Institute of Advanced Education, and the Australian Council of Education, April 22, 1985

'Poverty and families'. Poverty Summit, Heidelberg, April 28, 1985

'Australian families and their children – a new and challenging audience'. Australian Children's Television Foundation, 'The Challenge of Kids TV' Conference, May 6, 1985

'One-parent families – both sides of the picture'. Parents Without Partners Conference, May 25, 1985

'Family, work, ethnicity and migration'. Australian Administrative Staff College, May 28, 1985

'Poverty and its impact on educational life chances: family-produced or system-produced disadvantage?'. Conference of Non-Government Schools, June 20, 1985

'Getting the family act together – children, competence and family process'. John Smyth Memorial Lecture, University of Melbourne, June 26, 1985

'Changing family patterns and life styles in Australia today'. 4th Catholic Family Life Education Conference, Sydney, June 27, 1986

Publications

Children's participation in divorce, Discussion Paper No. 10, revised 1984, Institute of Family Studies (with Margaret Harrison)

'Adolescent competence, leaving home and changing family patterns', in *Key Papers, XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, Part I, pp. 355–426 (with Frank Maas)

'Emerging changes in family life and their effects on the 'health' of society', in *Transactions* of the Menzies Foundation, Vol. 9, 1985, pp. 35–39

'The way I see it – rethinking education's sacred cows', *The Educational Magazine*, Vol. 41, No. 4, 1984

'Families in crisis?', *Women's Action Alliance Newsletter*, October 1984

'Australian families and their children – a new and challenging audience', in *Australian Children's Television Foundation, 'The Challenge of Kids TV', Conference Papers No. 1*, May 1985

'Poverty and its impact on educational life-chances: Family-produced or system-produced disadvantage', published in *Conference proceedings, Disadvantaged Schools Program, Catholic Education Office*, and *Staff Development Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 111, June 1985

'Closing address', in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, pp. 319–326, August 1984

Forewords to IFS 1984–85 publications, as follows:

AFIT Bulletin, No. 2, February 1985

A roof over their heads: housing issues and families in Australia, Monograph No. 4, by T. Burke, L. Hancock and P. Newton, June 1984

'We can manage': expectations about care and varieties of family support among people 75 years of age and over, Monograph No. 5, by Alice Day, February 1985

Should families be a focus for policies? Policy Background Paper No. 5, by Frank Maas, June 1984

Cost of children in Australia, Working Paper No. 8, by Kerry Lovering, July 1984

The income unit in the Australian tax and social security systems, by Meredith Edwards, July 1984

Community based services for children and families, by Frank Maas and Susan Sasch, (eds.), December 1984

The child's eye view of family life, by Gay Ochiltree and Paul Amato, April 1985

Ethnic family values in Australia, published in association with Prentice-Hall of Australia by Des Storer (ed.), July 1985

Kate Funder

Talks

'Developmental trends in adolescent career choice'. XIXth Annual Conference of the Australian Psychological Society, Perth, August 24, 1984

'Work and family: career planning and curriculum implications'. Workshop for Pupil Welfare Coordinators, Victorian Education Department, April 16, 1985

Helen Glezer

Talks

'Traditional and non-traditional family values amongst young Australians'. Australian Family Therapy Conference, September 1984

Publications

'Antecedents and correlates of marriage and family attitudes in young Australian men and women', in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, August 1984

Tricia Harper

Talks

'The child – who am I?: changing laws for changing families'. North-eastern region Pre-school Association, Epping, July 27, 1984

Introduced and chaired session on Relinquishment in Adoption at National Conference of the Australian Psychological Society, Perth, WA, August 16, 1984

'Adoption legislation: the changing scene'. Keynote paper to Western Australian Adoption Conference, Perth, WA, August 18, 1984

'Changes in adoption – the way forward'. Annual General Meeting of the Child Care Service of the Uniting Church, Melbourne, September 12, 1984

'The 1980s – new directions and developments'. National Conference, Children in Shared Care, Brisbane, September 19, 1984

'The changing face of adoption'. The Children's Bureau of Australia, Melbourne, November 27, 1984

'Directions for 1980s – caring for children and families'. St Anthony's Home for Children, Melbourne, February 25, 1985

'One parent families in Australia'. Melbourne University medical students, April 4, 11 and May 2, 1985

'Future directions in child and family welfare – the 80s and beyond'. Social Work students, Preston Institute of Technology, May 7, 1985

Publications

'Victorian adoption reform proposals and the Australian scene', in *Proceedings of a Public Seminar, Adoption Legislation: the Changing Scene*, University of Western Australia, August 1984, pp. 41-62

'Creating children – a uniform approach to the law and practice of reproduction technology in Australia', Report of the Family Law Council and the Asche Committee on issues relating to AID, IVF, embryo transfer and related matters, June 1985

Margaret Harrison

Talks

'Children and family law'. Australian Family Therapy Conference, Canberra, September 6, 1984

'Child support – public or private?'. *Family Law in '84 Conference*, Hobart, November 16, 1984 (published in the seminar papers by the Law Council of Australia)

'Problems of defining matrimonial property and measuring the economic consequences of divorce'. *Family Law in '84 Conference*, Hobart, November 17, 1984 (published in the seminar papers by the Law Council of Australia)

Publications

'The changing role of law in marital breakdown' in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1984

Evaluation of the report based on the Adelaide Rape Crisis Centre Incest Phone In published as *Child Sexual Abuse*, Office of Minister of Health, South Australia (with Lyn McGuigan)

David Keane

Talks

'The Institute of Family Studies'. Elizabeth Street Community Health Centre, Melbourne, November 21, 1984

'IFS functions and activities with particular reference to ethnic issues'. Brunswick Community Centre, Melbourne, April 18, 1985

Frank Maas

Talks

'Economic circumstances affecting family well-being'. Townsville, Toowoomba, Brisbane (Qld. Year of Family), July 1984

'The changing context for independence'. Youth and Responsibility Conference, La Trobe University, August 1984

Response to 'Family support for students – expectations and realities'. Special conference on Income Testing and Student Assistance Schemes, Canberra, December 1984

'Family policy as a perspective'. Diploma of Public Policy students, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, April 1984

'Youth perspectives in current research'. Youth Ministers Council Working Party on Youth Research Needs, Brisbane, May 1985

Publications

'Adolescent competence, leaving home and changing family patterns', in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Part I, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, pp. 355–426, August 1984 (with Don Edgar)

'Throwing out the baby ... the need to assess unintended outcomes of the tax transfer system', in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Part I, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, pp. 677–700, August 1984 (with Andrew Burbidge)

Should families be a focus for policies? Policy Background Paper No. 5, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1984

Community based services for children and families, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1985 (with Susan Sasch)

Families and Australia's economic future. Submission to EPAC, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1985

Comments in response to 'Family support for students – expectations and realities', *Income testing and student assistance schemes*, Student Assistant Policy Series, Vol. 1, No. 1, Commonwealth Department of Education, Canberra

Changing the Australian taxation system: towards a family income guarantee. Submission to EPAC, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1985

Peter McDonald

Talks

'Changes in the family in Australia and the USA' (with Dr Arland Thornton). Australian Population Association, Melbourne, August 1984

'Recent changes in marriage and the family'. Caroline Chisholm Society, Melbourne, October 1984

'Aspects of change in Australian childbearing behaviour: childlessness and births in second relationships'. The Fertility Society of Australia, Brisbane, December 1984

'Teenage pregnancy'. Melbourne Pregnancy Support Groups, Melbourne, January 1985

Publications

'Life course transitions in Victoria in the 1880s', in Patricia Grimshaw, Chris McConville and Ellen McEwen (eds.), *Families in Colonial Australia*, George Allen and Unwin, Sydney, pp. 64-82

'Social organization and nuptiality in developing societies', in John Cleland and John Hobcraft (eds.), *Reproductive change in developing countries*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 87-114

Nuptiality and completed fertility: a study of starting, stopping and spacing behavior, World Fertility Survey Comparative Studies No. 35, International Statistical Institute, Voorburg, p. 64

Marriage dissolution and remarriage, World Fertility Survey Comparative Studies No. 34, International Statistical Institute, Voorburg, p. 94

'Implications for families of third world fertility trends', in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, pp. 191-206

Gay Ochiltree

Talks

'Changing role of the family'. Pre-school teachers and advisors for Williamstown, Werribee and Altona areas, Victoria, July 6, 1984

'The effect of conflict on child competence in three family types'. La Trobe University, Psychology Department, July 2, 1984

'Children in step-families'. Australian Family Therapy Conference, Australian National University, Canberra, September 5, 1984

'Changing families and the need for support in education'. Brisbane South Multicultural Committee, September 14, 1984

'Family issues in Australia'. Keynote address to the International Symposium on Family and Society in Transition, Kobe, Japan, October 22, 1984

'The changing Australian family – effects upon child care needs'. Statewide Children's Services Advisers, Department of Youth and Community Services, NSW, February 19, 1985

'Adolescence and the family'. Catholic Religious Educators State Conference, Melbourne, March 13, 1985

'The work of the IFS' and 'The effects of changing families on education'. Staff in Teacher Development for Victoria, Melbourne, April 4, 1985

'Child care and pre-school in the various states of Australia'. Kindergarten Teachers Association of New Zealand, Wellington, NZ, April 19, 1985

'The child's use of family resources'. Staff of NZ Council for Education Research, Wellington, New Zealand, April 19, 1985

'The role of the family in the education of the child'. Victoria University Centre for Continuing Education, New Zealand, April 20, 1985

'The child's use of family resources'. Research, Correspondence School and Early Childhood Services staff of the New Zealand Education Department, Auckland, New Zealand, April 23, 1985

'The work of the Institute and its relevance to education'. NSW Education Department, Pupil Welfare Committee, Sydney, June 6, 1985

'Principals as facilitators and contact with community support groups'. Primary Principals (Catholic Education), Melbourne, June 26, 1985

Publications

'The effects of family conflict on the competence of children' in *The Educational Magazine*, Vol. 41, No. 4, 1984 (with Paul Amato)

'The child's use of family resources' in *Proceedings of the XXth International CFR Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies*, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, August 1984 (with Paul Amato)

The child's eye view of family life, Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, 1985 (with Paul Amato)

Deborah Whithear

Talks

'Marketing aspects of FAMILY *Database*'. Victorian Online Users Group, Melbourne, December 4, 1984

Publications

FAMILY *Database* print version. Vol. 1, 1984; April 1985 update

'FAMILY *Database* in action' in *Australian Database Developers Association Newsletter*, No. 11, May/June 1985, pp. 3–4

Ilene Wolcott

Talks

'Marriage in the 1980s'. National Council of Jewish Women, Melbourne, September 1984

'Marriage and divorce: The Changing Community'. Chadstone Community Health Centre Annual Meeting, September 1984

'Marriage today and yesterday'. RMIT Gender, Sex, Society Seminar, Melbourne, October, 1984

Conference Summation. Australian Association of Marriage Education Annual Meeting, November 1984

'Changing Australian families'. Monash University Social Work Fieldwork Supervisors, Melbourne, November 1984

'Changing Australian families'. Monash University Social Work Students, Melbourne, November 1984

'Research direction of the IFS and implications for family therapists'. Victorian Association of Family Therapist Research Committee, Melbourne, December 1984

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